

# California History

The Magazine of the California Historical Society

winter 1979/80





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#### COVER

In 1895, Horatio Nelson Rust (seated) traveled to Arizona to see the Hopi Snake Dance at Walpi. His companions included Mrs. Thaddeus Lowe, a noted basket collector, and photographers A. C. Vroman (who photographed this scene) and C. J. Crandall. They spent three nights at Sichomovi where they were objects of great curiosity. Behind Mrs. Lowe is the ladder on which she sat to be carried 600 feet to the mesa top. For a portrait of the remarkable Rust, turn to the article beginning on page 304.

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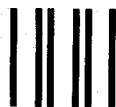
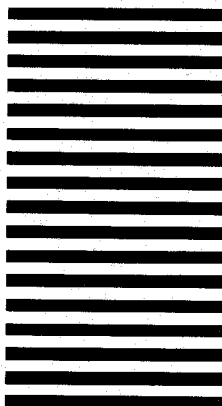
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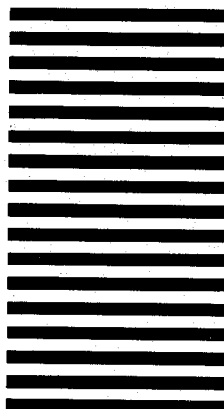
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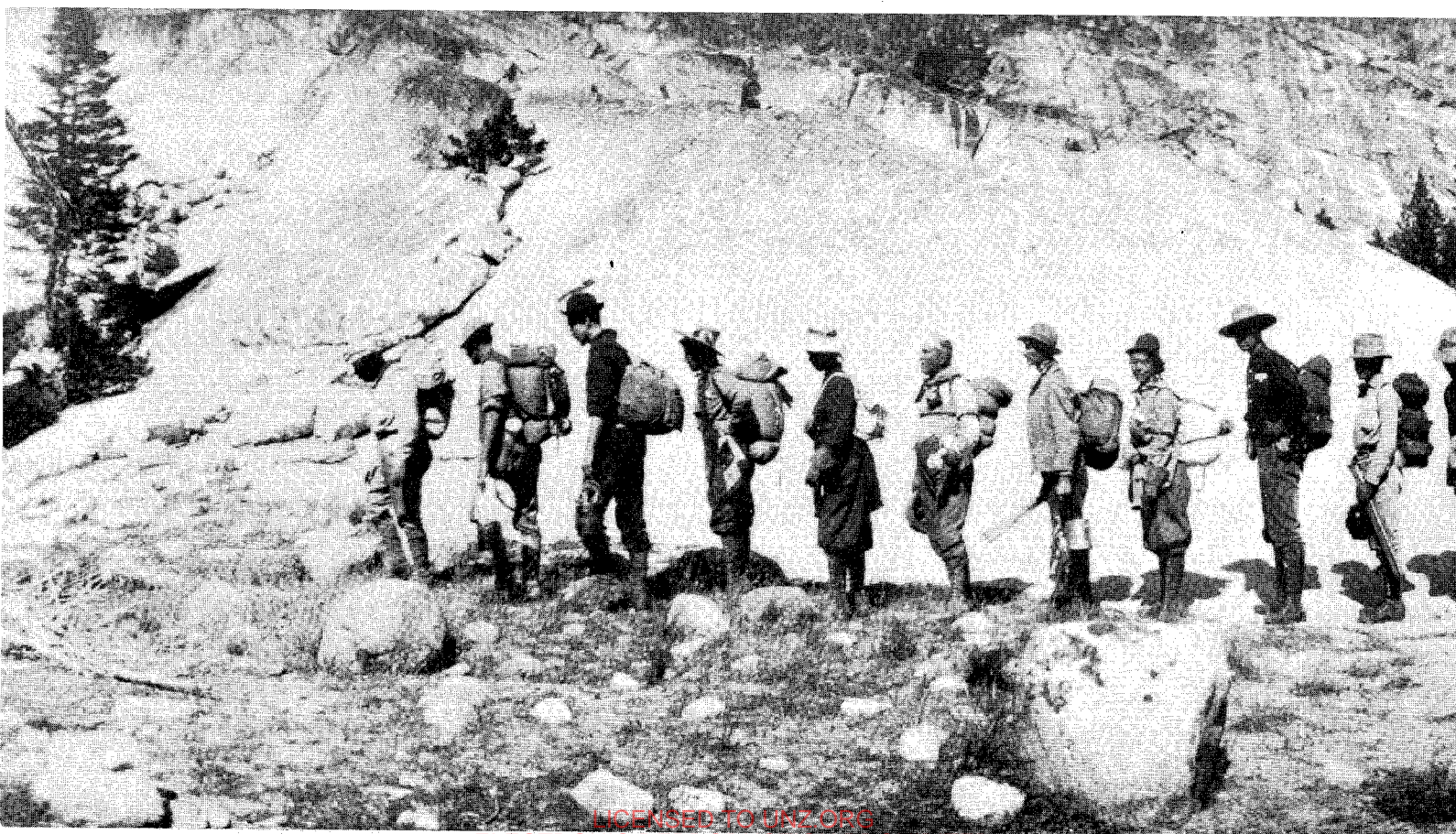
# Engineers and Conservationists

Early twentieth-century reformers sometimes dreamed of creating a harmonious society run by non-partisan technical experts. This society, the progressives believed, would be natural and simple. Machines would relieve the drudgery of work; technical experts would manage

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government and purge inefficiency, corruption, and waste from the political process.<sup>1</sup> With its emphasis on scientific management and on utilization of resources for the benefit of the public, the progressives' conservation movement reflected these underlying beliefs. In fact, in few other fields were the expert, the planner, and the scientist so prominent.<sup>2</sup> Although the idea of conservation of resources was popularized by such political leaders as Theodore Roosevelt as part of a wide-reaching reform program which aimed at "democratizing"





# *in the Progressive Era*

America for the benefit of all its citizens, technical experts were the ones entrusted with the task of giving practical substance to these broad aspirations.<sup>3</sup>

The lengthy national controversy over San Francisco's plan to dam and flood the Hetch Hetchy Valley of Yosemite National Park fully demonstrates the progressive concept of conservation as reform based on scientific management and development of resources for the public's benefit. Not only were the city's plans for the development of Hetch Hetchy prepared by engi-

neers, but its political struggle to win federal approval of the project was managed by the same engineers—in particular by an energetic city employee named Marsden Manson.<sup>4</sup> However, as Manson and others discovered, the Hetch Hetchy controversy also raised for the first time serious questions about the wisdom of the technical experts' definition of conservation and about the easy assumption that the public interest would always be served by placing experts in charge. A look at the role of Manson and other engineers in conceiving and managing



*Overleaf: In 1909 members of the Sierra Club hiked the Hetch Hetchy high country to educate themselves about the threatened dam project and to gather photographs of the still largely unexplored region.*

the city's campaign to win federal approval of the dam project shows how this particular issue helped to shatter the era's blind faith in pure and righteous expertise. Like other problems of the time, conservation proved to be more complicated than the experts at first realized. No single, obvious, perfect policy could be formulated; rather, the progressives discovered, competing objectives demanded to be balanced and compromised in a process which was essentially political.

A central figure in this controversy was the scientist, engineer, and city employee, Marsden Manson. Born into a comfortable family (his father seems to have been a lawyer) in western Virginia in 1850, Manson earned both bachelor of science and civil engineering degrees from Virginia Military Institute.<sup>5</sup> He later accumulated further scientific credentials by gaining a doctorate in physics and chemistry from the University of California at Berkeley in 1893. As a scientist, his particular interest was climatology, and in addition to a number of papers on the topic, in 1903 he published *The Evolution of Climates*. When reissued in a second edition in 1922, it was described by a reviewer in *Science* as "a notable contribution."<sup>6</sup> Manson thus qualified as a "pure" scientist as well as an engineer.

Manson's primary career, however, proved to be that of an engineer. Employed briefly for the federal government as an engineer in Virginia, he moved in 1878 to California, where he began a thirty-four-year engineering career with the state, federal, and city governments. His projects involved both civil and hydraulic engineering and spanned such diverse fields as highway construction, harbor planning, and the design of irrigation and public waterworks systems. Both as a highway planner and as a consultant to state and federal governments on the dumping of mining debris into mountain rivers, he travelled extensively through the Sierra Nevada. Few Californians of his generation could boast so large and intimate knowledge of the state's major mountain range, although after his marriage in 1883, he

lived and worked primarily in San Francisco.<sup>7</sup> Between 1900 and his retirement in 1912, he was employed primarily by the city, first as a member of the Board of Public Works from 1900 to 1903 and as city engineer from 1908 to 1912. His devotion to the city's interests, however, continued even when he was not officially on the payroll.

Manson's travels through the Sierra aroused the engineer's interest in the area's potential for water supplies and hydroelectric power and stimulated his enthusiasm for its beauty as well. Throughout his life, he was an avid outdoorsman, stealing moments to camp in the mountains or to travel in such faraway wilderness areas as Alaska and central Russia. In 1895, Manson joined the young Sierra Club (founded in 1892), which was dedicated to exploring, enjoying, and preserving "the forests and other natural features of the Sierra Nevada Mountains."<sup>8</sup> Some years later the conflict between Manson's interests in the Sierra and those of the majority of the members became obvious, but in the early years no one saw incongruity in a highway and water-development engineer joining the Sierrans.

Manson's involvement in progressive politics grew out of his ties with San Francisco city government. In the mid-1890s, he was employed as a member of a special board of engineers to study the city's drainage system; the board concluded that the city's problems were insoluble unless the city government could win more power from the state legislature so that it could control its own affairs. Exactly the same conclusion had been reached in 1894 by a committee of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors that had been established to recommend a new water supply source for the city, and so, on these very practical issues, a natural alliance developed between the engineers and the politicians. During the late 1890s, the two groups joined forces with others to press the state legislature to issue a new city charter that would require the city to own its utilities and to administer those utilities through a professional Board





*Sierra Club member and city engineer Marsden Manson enthusiastically spearheaded the campaign to dam the Tuolumne River and provide "an unfailing supply of pure water" to San Francisco.*

of Public Works made up of technical experts.<sup>9</sup> In 1900 they won, and the city received a new charter incorporating these reformers' demands. The Democratic reform mayor, James D. Phelan, welcomed the mandate and lost no time in appointing a Board of Public Works that included as one of its three members his friend, Marsden Manson.<sup>10</sup>

When appointed to the Board of Public Works, Manson was just fifty years old and at the height of his career. A man of deceptively ordinary appearance, he concealed behind his meek exterior a prodigious appetite for work, exceptional personal intensity, and a fierce temper. Humorless and unable to relax when engaged in an interesting project, he drove his staff as hard as he drove himself and tried obsessively to oversee and control every phase of the work. His intensity usually won him success, but it strained him and those around him enormously.<sup>11</sup> Partisan and combative, Manson was hardly the detached, impersonal technical expert glori-

fied in progressive mythology, but had he fitted the image better, he might not have been as effective an advocate of the city's cause.

The water problem which came to engross Manson was not new. San Francisco's location on a sandy peninsula in a semi-arid climate zone meant that ever since the days of the gold rush, water had been a crucial—and profitable—concern. By the 1870s one company, the Spring Valley Water Company, had become the city's sole supplier and had assured its monopoly by buying up nearly all of the watershed around the city. This foresight enabled the company to provide the city with enough water for its needs, but it also made it possible for the company to set its own prices. Battles over water rates became annual irritants to the city fathers, but their attempts to secure new water sources were frustrated by the company's political influence and the city government's weakness under the old charter. Not until the new charter was granted in 1900 did the prospects for breaking the company's stranglehold brighten.<sup>12</sup>

Supported by the new charter's mandate that the city own its utilities, the new Board of Public Works, led by City Engineer Carl E. Grunsky, plunged energetically into the problem in 1900. Reviewing earlier proposals for alternative water sources and considering new ones, they gradually reduced the number of possibilities. One option, of course, was to purchase Spring Valley, but the company was not eager to sell at what city officials thought a reasonable price, and in any case the city estimated that within a few years more water would be needed than the company's holdings could provide. If the company could be induced to sell out in the future, the city might buy, but in the meantime the board preferred to find a new source which could supply the city's present and future needs—an estimated 60 million gallons a day—without Spring Valley.

Although several sources were available, including Lake Tahoe in the east, the slopes of Mt. Shasta in the

north, and the Sacramento River in the Central Valley, all of them suffered from drawbacks such as competing claims to the water, inadequate storage, poor water quality, or major technical problems. After the board winnowed out the unattractive proposals, only one possibility remained. As state and federal surveyors had regularly pointed out since 1879, the Tuolumne, which rises in the northern part of Yosemite National Park to become a major tributary of the San Joaquin River, seemed ideally suited to "furnish the city of San Francisco with an unfailing supply of pure water."<sup>14</sup>

*T*he decision to apply to the federal government for permission to use the Hetch Hetchy Valley of the Tuolumne as a reservoir for the city's water was made by city engineers on purely technical grounds. They did not consider whether their proposal violated the letter or spirit of the 1890 act which had included the Hetch Hetchy Valley within Yosemite National Park. On the contrary, the fact that the potential watershed and reservoir site lay within the park was, from their point of view, a great advantage because it diminished the likelihood of competing claims and assured the permanent purity of the water. Although one federal surveyor had earlier described Hetch Hetchy as "a veritable Yosemite Valley on a small scale," a broad, flat river valley with "rugged granite walls, crowned with domes, towers, spires and battlements" which seemed "to rise almost perpendicularly upon all sides to a height of 2,500 feet above this beautiful emerald meadow," City Engineer Carl Grunsky saw it quite differently. When he visited Hetch Hetchy in the fall of 1900, he was unmoved by the valley's cascades and waterfalls, its luxurious meadows and towering trees; what fascinated him were the valley's elevation of 3,500 feet, which would minimize the need for pumping, and the narrow,

rocky gorge through which the river rushed on its way out of the valley—a perfect site for a dam.<sup>15</sup> Neither aesthetic considerations nor thought about the purpose and function of the park seem to have been raised by anyone in the city government, and had the experts thought of them, such matters would probably have seemed irrelevant.

The main concern of the city officials was not scenery but speculators. Once they agreed that Hetch Hetchy was ideal for their purposes, city leaders moved quickly and secretly to secure additional surveys of the valley and to ask the Interior Department for permission to dam the Tuolumne and flood Hetch Hetchy Valley. While this application was pending, Grunsky drew up plans for a reservoir and aqueduct to supply 60 million gallons of water a day to the Bay Area and for a small generating station to provide electricity for pumping water over the Coast Range.<sup>16</sup> In February of 1901, even before the city asked the government for the Hetch Hetchy site, Congress had passed a Right of Way Act authorizing the sort of development Grunsky had in mind, so by the end of 1902 the way seemed clear for beginning construction during 1903.<sup>17</sup> Having acted with unusual alacrity for a governmental group, San Francisco's leaders now expected to reap the benefits of their foresight and diligence.

Then problems began to develop. In October, 1902, George H. Mendell, president of the Board of Public Works and an early, strong advocate of a Sierra water supply, died, and James Phelan decided not to run for a fourth term as mayor. In February, 1903, Phelan signed over his filing papers for Hetch Hetchy to the city (the original claim had been made in his name to assure secrecy), but the new administration under Mayor Eugene E. Schmitz was not enthusiastic about the Hetch Hetchy project.<sup>18</sup>

The project also faced major obstacles at the national level. In January, 1903, Secretary of the Interior Ethan Allen Hitchcock ruled that the 1890 act which estab-





*In 1903 Hetch Hetchy's emerald meadow grounded granite walls climbing almost perpendicularly 2500 feet above the valley floor.*

lished Yosemite National Park *required* him to protect all of the park's natural features, but that the Right of Way Act of 1901 only *permitted* him to authorize construction of dams and aqueducts. Under the circumstances, Hitchcock decided he could not permit the construction of the proposed reservoir. In fact, a group of engineers appointed by Hitchcock to study transportation needs within the park recommended (unsuccessfully) that the Right of Way Act itself be repealed because, they warned, it would give away too much public land.<sup>19</sup> Contrary to the progressive ideal, then, serious disagreements had erupted among the technical experts, and by 1904 it seemed unlikely the city would ever get what it wanted in Yosemite Park.

Marsden Manson now became the central actor in the play. Early in 1904, Grunsky left San Francisco to become a member of the new Isthmian Canal Commission, and Manson, although no longer on the Board of Public Works, apparently appointed himself chief promoter and lobbyist for the Hetch Hetchy project. Though doubtful about Hetch Hetchy, the new city administration decided to try once again, and so the city issued Manson a memorial asking Congress to authorize the Hetch Hetchy project despite the objections of Secretary Hitchcock. So armed, Manson went to Washington, D.C., but learned that he might have more success working through the executive branch than appealing

to Congress. Rather than asking for legislation, he talked to several administration leaders, including President Theodore Roosevelt's close friend, Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot, Director of the Bureau of Corporations James R. Garfield (appointed secretary of the interior in March of 1907), and eventually the president himself.<sup>20</sup>

Following Manson's visit, Roosevelt questioned his attorney general about Interior Secretary Hitchcock's belief that he was primarily obligated to protect the park. Attorney General W. H. Moody examined the matter and in October informed the president that in his view, the 1901 law was "intended to vest in the Secretary [of the Interior] a discretionary authority to grant or refuse applications of this kind." Thus the decision became entirely a matter of executive judgment, and a delighted Manson reinstated the city's petition for Hetch Hetchy, convinced that with the president's support it would be approved.<sup>21</sup>

Manson's 1905 visit to Washington produced the first strong interest in and support for the project on the part of major national leaders, and perhaps even more importantly, it brought the proposal under the general umbrella of "conservation." What had previously been only a water project now became a symbol of the progressive conservation policy—resources should be saved only until they could be developed for the public's





welfare. For Manson's new allies on the national level, the Hetch Hetchy proposal acquired symbolic importance which excluded consideration of possible alternatives: because the proposed dam was within a national park, the Interior Department's authorization would prove conservation did not mean locking up resources forever. The desire to demonstrate that point would soon become a major determinant of the Roosevelt administration's policy.

In the spring of 1905, however, Manson returned to San Francisco to find that in his absence the city government had again lost interest in the Hetch Hetchy proposal. Reopening the water question, the Board of Supervisors advertised for new proposals to supply the city with water and authorized the appointment of a three-man committee of engineers to examine and evaluate new possibilities: Manson managed to get himself appointed to the new committee, but it soon became apparent that it was intended only as a respectable cover for Schmitz and his colleagues' corrupt plans. In Jan-

uary, 1906, the Board of Supervisors, arguing that delays in winning federal approval and opposition from Central Valley irrigationists in the Modesto-Turlock area made the Hetch Hetchy scheme impractical, voted to drop it. The engineers, including Manson, were now directed to report only on other possibilities. Although protesting vigorously against the board's decision, Manson went quickly to work, and on February 7 he submitted adverse reports on a Mokelumne River proposal and on a project proposed by the Bay Cities Water Company.<sup>22</sup> This latter report was a nasty jolt to Schmitz and his cronies, who had already worked out lucrative and illegal arrangements to award Bay Cities the city's water contract. Now they had to find a way to circumvent Manson's objections.

On April 18, 1906, the great earthquake and fire leveled San Francisco and incidentally provided Schmitz and his friends with a plausible excuse for claiming that a new water supply had become an emergency priority. Manson, who was assisting the reconstruction effort as



*President Theodore Roosevelt (right) and John Muir (left) visited Yosemite Valley in 1903. In following years Roosevelt was attacked for wanting to lock up natural resources rather than develop them for use.*

a volunteer member of the Water Supply and Fire Protection Committee, agreed that the situation had become more urgent but still claimed to be unimpressed with the Bay Cities' plans. In July his opinion was confirmed by yet another committee of engineers that had been appointed to restudy the problem. This group reported that no proposal was sufficiently compelling to be recommended without a full study of all of them, a process that the committee estimated would take at least a year. Schmitz and the supervisors, declaring that any such delay was out of the question, thereupon voted to ignore the committee's advice and accept the Bay Cities proposal. When the engineers resigned in protest over this decision, their action encouraged an investigation that brought Schmitz and sixteen members of the Board of Supervisors to trial for graft, long before the Bay Cities project could get underway.<sup>23</sup>

By the fall of 1906, the prospects for approval of the Hetch Hetchy project were brightening. The graft prosecution was formally inaugurated in October, while word came from Washington that Roosevelt favored the city's application and that Pinchot was urging Manson to press it.<sup>24</sup> What had happened was that the Hetch Hetchy project had now taken on a certain urgency at the national level because Roosevelt and Pinchot found their conservation policy under attack from critics who charged that it was intended to lock up resources permanently. To counter those attacks, Pinchot had begun planning a White House Conference on the Conservation of Natural Resources which was to emphasize the theme of development of resources for public use, and Roosevelt seized the opportunity offered by the resignation of Secretary Hitchcock in March of 1907 to appoint in his place a man more committed to using resources, James R. Garfield.<sup>25</sup> Under the circumstances, San Francisco's Hetch Hetchy application offered an ideal way to show that even in the national parks, resources would be developed in the public interest.

But if the national atmosphere was perfect from the

city's point of view, problems still existed at the local level. Despite the beginning of the graft prosecutions, Schmitz and his cronies held onto their offices and blocked the Board of Supervisors from reinstating the city's request for permission to use Hetch Hetchy. Manson chafed at the delay, fearing that the national situation would change or that speculators would file on the Hetch Hetchy reservoir site while the city's claim was in abeyance. In the hope of applying pressure to the supervisors, he urged the elite San Francisco Commonwealth Club to support the Hetch Hetchy project, but the members, who agreed that a Sierra water supply was desirable, cautiously declined to endorse a specific proposal.<sup>26</sup> Not until July of 1907 was Schmitz finally forced out, and on July 22, the new Board of Supervisors immediately reinstated the application for use of Hetch Hetchy. Five days later, on July 27, Secretary Garfield came to town during an inspection tour of the West and held a hearing on the city's request. Mayor Edward R. Taylor hastily appointed Manson and Phelan to represent the city before the secretary, and they welcomed the opportunity.<sup>27</sup> Arguing vigorously that the secretary needed only to consider specific objections to the Hetch Hetchy proposal, not possible alternatives, they succeeded in narrowing the scope of the hearing so that when Garfield returned to Washington, city officials were confident that they would be awarded what they sought.<sup>28</sup> At last it looked as though the city would have a new water supply.

Following the July hearing, Mayor Taylor asked Manson to become the city engineer. Grunsky wanted his old position back, but Taylor preferred Manson, whom he shrewdly recognized as "very zealous in the City's interest." After some haggling over salary, the appointment was announced in January, 1908. In the newspapers which supported the Hetch Hetchy project, the choice was praised as evidence of the new administration's commitment and determination.<sup>29</sup>

Manson, of course, rejoiced in the challenge and

opportunity before him and plunged into his duties with his usual gusto. He prepared replies to the claims of irrigationists in the Central Valley that they had a prior right to the Tuolumne waters, and in April he went to Washington, D.C., to press the city's case. There he conferred at length with Secretary Garfield, and by the end of April he had worked out an arrangement under which the city would guarantee water for irrigation and agree to develop subsidiary reservoirs at Lake Eleanor and Cherry Valley before building a dam at Hetch Hetchy. This arrangement pacified the irrigationists, and on May 11—two days before the White House conservation conference—Garfield issued a permit to the city to begin construction of the project. Then Manson returned to San Francisco to begin a frantic summer's work, which included drafting detailed plans for the new project, arranging for surveys, buying options on privately owned lands in the area, shepherding a party of supervisors over the site, and preparing the specifications for a proposed bond issue to finance the first phases of the project.<sup>30</sup>

As Manson worked, the first public opposition to the city's plans began to develop. So secretly had the early phases of the city's campaign been conducted that it was not until 1905 that members of the Sierra Club became aware of the possible threat to Yosemite Park. At that point the club was absorbed in a campaign to persuade the state legislature that Yosemite Valley, then a state park, should be turned over to the federal government for inclusion in Yosemite National Park, where it would be safer against encroachment. Until that struggle was won in 1906, the club had little energy for other causes. Nor did the matter seem especially urgent before 1907 because of Secretary Hitchcock's refusal to issue a reservoir permit. Although Gifford Pinchot's support for

the project was an ominous sign, John Muir and his friends in the Sierra Club could not imagine that their old ally, Theodore Roosevelt, would permit the defilement of the national park. After Secretary Garfield's hearing in San Francisco, Muir warned that the contest was likely to be "the worst ever," but he remained confident that "if we can keep the protests flying we are sure to win."<sup>31</sup> Muir gravely underestimated the seriousness of the situation.

In essence, the case presented by Muir and other advocates hoping to preserve Hetch Hetchy rested on aesthetic considerations only. Teachers, lawyers, lecturers, and writers predominated in the group, and they showed little sensitivity either to the political realities which pushed Roosevelt to endorse the reservoir project unless he felt opposition from the people of California, or to the pragmatic, multiple-use arguments advanced by the engineers.<sup>32</sup> Thus when the Sierra Club's board of directors voted in September, 1907, to send a resolution to Secretary Garfield stating their views, their argument emphasized the "beauty" and "grandeur" of Hetch Hetchy and its importance for "pleasure-camping." To the city's contention that Hetch Hetchy offered unique advantages in cost and water quality, they weakly replied only that equally good water was available elsewhere, though they did not say where and admitted that the cost of obtaining it would be greater than from Hetch Hetchy.<sup>33</sup> Without realizing it, they were conceding the enemy's strongest point.

Their aesthetic arguments failed to appeal to those who were supporting the project or those who had to make the crucial decisions in Washington, and the park lovers were also woefully inept even in their occasional use of technical data. For example, one of the arguments advanced by opponents of the Hetch Hetchy project during 1907 and 1908 was that use of the valley as a reservoir would necessitate closing all of the watershed—most of the park—to campers in order to avoid pollution. This was a ludicrous charge. As city representatives



pointed out, reservoirs were commonly built without danger in areas far more populous than Yosemite would ever be. What was more, when urging rejection of Hetch Hetchy, the park lovers were necessarily arguing that the city should draw its water from some other area where the watershed would surely be less protected than in Yosemite. Realizing that their "pollution" argument weakened their own case, they eventually dropped it.<sup>34</sup> In the meantime, however, they had demonstrated their scientific ignorance and made themselves ridiculous to people for whom scientific-technical considerations were decisive.

Yet if the preservationists' arguments were not always persuasive, their efforts to mobilize public opposition to the Hetch Hetchy proposal did affect Washington. In the fall of 1908, San Francisco asked Congress to allow it to exchange city-owned lands outside the proposed reservoir sites for federally-owned lands within them, as the Garfield permit for construction required. The nature lovers saw this as an opportunity to attack the permit from the rear and decided to concentrate their efforts on blocking the legislation in Congress. They organized a vigorous campaign to arouse public opinion and combined that with what Sierra Clubber William Colby called "effective work on the members of committees having the matter in charge." Although these efforts made progress, they heavily taxed the strength and wallets of the small group of men who led the fight. "How this business Hetch-hetches one's time," Muir lamented. "It won't even let me sleep."<sup>35</sup>

Hearings on the proposed legislation opened in Washington in December of 1908. Manson and Supervisor A. H. Giannini were there to present the city's case, while the opposition was represented by Spring Valley's lawyers and some preservationists, whom Manson sarcastically characterized as "a number of prominent eastern gentlemen, some of whom were actually acquainted with the subject." The congressmen, however, were impressed by the flood of letters and

telegrams that the nature lovers produced, and in January, 1909, Manson and Giannini had to ask the House committee for a delay while they brought in reinforcements from San Francisco. These new efforts eventually produced a favorable report on the proposed bill from the House committee, but nevertheless by mid-February it seemed that the Senate committee would offer an adverse report.<sup>36</sup>

Manson believed that Spring Valley's opposition was the main cause of the Senate opposition, rather than the efforts of "misguided sentimentalists and enthusiasts," but in any case he recognized the necessity for a change in tactics. Asking the Senate sponsors of the bill to withdraw it to avoid open defeat, he exploited outgoing Secretary Garfield's sympathy to secure a series of permits that Manson believed would allow the city to go ahead with construction without congressional action. By April the engineer was satisfied that he had all the authority he needed to begin work, and during the spring and summer of 1909 he prepared detailed cost estimates on the project while pressing forward negotiations with Spring Valley for the purchase of the company by the city. If a pair of proposed bond issues to fund the Hetch Hetchy project and buy Spring Valley were approved by the city's voters in January, 1910, Manson felt certain that at last his political troubles would be over.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, however, they were just beginning. In March, 1909, Roosevelt gave up the White House to William Howard Taft, and Secretary Garfield passed the Interior Department to the care of Richard Achilles Ballinger. Preservationists, who had won a tenuous victory with the blocking of the city's bill in February, now laid plans to consolidate their success by asking Ballinger to rescind the Garfield permit for construction of the reservoir. They wrote a series of articles to publicize the issue and organized a letter-writing campaign, and in April the conservation organizations formally petitioned the new secretary to revoke the permit. That fall, while

*While the Sierra Club issued jeremiads  
about Hetch Hetchy's beauty and importance  
for pleasure camping, city officials  
stressed the unique cost and water quality  
advantages of a dam across the  
Tuolumne River.*

Ballinger still pondered the case, John Muir accomplished some vigorous lobbying while conducting the president and secretary of the interior on a tour of Yosemite Park and reported enthusiastically that "everything looks promising for our side of the fight. . . ." <sup>38</sup> Evidently the city had not won yet.

As 1909 waned, Manson's optimism slipped away. In November he discovered that the construction permits he had secured from Garfield earlier in the year did not give the city sufficient authority to begin building dams. Early in January, 1910, with the special bond election just a few days away, more blows fell. After a long and acrimonious battle between Ballinger and Pinchot over Alaskan conservation policy, Taft fired Chief Forester Pinchot and thus deprived the city of its most influential friend in the administration. At the same time San Francisco's new mayor, P. H. McCarthy, joined with the city's labor unions in recommending that the voters defeat the bond issue intended to raise money to buy Spring Valley; the price, the mayor said, was exorbitant. When the election was held on January 14, the voters approved \$45 million worth of bonds for the Hetch Hetchy project but defeated the proposal to buy the water company. Despondent at these reverses, Manson told former Secretary Garfield that he believed his own city service was over and that the new city administration would give up Hetch Hetchy. <sup>39</sup>

His opponents, however, were having troubles too. Although the preservationists had long resented charges that their efforts were being financed by Spring Valley, the company's well-paid lawyers had been useful if somewhat unappealing allies. However, when the company and city at last reached a purchase agreement—even though the purchase did not then go through—the company quietly shifted sides, abandoning its opposition to the Hetch Hetchy project and working with the city to ensure that the purchase would be eventually approved.

Moreover, at the same time that they were losing the

water company's help, the preservationists found their own ranks splitting. Within both of the major organizations opposing the project, the Sierra Club and the eastern Appalachian Mountain Club, serious differences had existed for some time over the merits of the Hetch Hetchy proposal. San Franciscans, of course, had a practical interest in acquiring a dependable water supply, but as the split in the eastern club indicated, the issue posed a problem for all conservationists. In the Hetch Hetchy controversy the young conservation movement confronted for the first time a dilemma: in a conflict between development and preservation of dwindling resources, what criteria should determine policy? Up to this point most conservationists, like other Americans, had shared the frontier attitude that resources were unlimited and needed merely to be developed wisely in the public's interest. Only a handful of visionaries like John Muir suggested that conservation ought to include the permanent preservation of some resources in a natural state, and this argument was rarely clearly articulated. Although the preservationists did win some notable achievements—especially the beginning of a national park system—because "locking up" a few scenic areas did not threaten the interests of developers, the Hetch Hetchy issue was one of the first national questions to make clear the conflicting aims of the two wings of the conservation movement: planned development versus preservation. In truth, although both sides in the struggle freely accused each other of being in league with the devil, the conflict was more a civil war than a fight against external enemies. For the first time, basic goals of the conservation movement were being debated, and the split at the top which began with John Muir and Gifford Pinchot soon extended downward throughout nearly every conservation organization. As it developed, the issue became a question of whether the public's interests would be better served by keeping the valley as a recreation area for future generations (few people had then struggled over its rugged and perilous trails), or





whether it would serve the public better as a reservoir and source of electrical power for people living in the San Francisco region. On such questions reasonable men could and did differ, with the result that the conservation organizations found themselves locked in bitter debate just when they most needed unity. Eventually, Muir and those who agreed with him were able to defeat their rivals or to patch together new organizations to carry on the fight against the city, but in so doing they permanently lost some former allies and weakened their ability to exploit the defects in the city's case.<sup>40</sup>

Ready or not, the crisis was upon them. On February 25, 1910, Secretary Ballinger at long last came to his decision and issued an order requiring San Francisco to show cause why the Garfield permit for reservoir construction should not be revoked. Both the city and its opponents, Ballinger ordered, should be prepared to present their cases to him in Washington in May.<sup>41</sup>

"Ballinger's bombshell" delighted preservationists,

and they redoubled their efforts to make their "temporary victory . . . permanent. . . ." "The H.Hy. fight is soon to grow hot," John Muir observed, "but all signs now seem to spell victory for our side."<sup>42</sup> To assure that victory, the Californians wisely took up a suggestion which had been made by Harriet Monroe of Chicago in 1909 and began looking for an engineer to support their case at the hearing. After some inquiry, Muir and his friends found Philip E. Harroun of Berkeley, who was willing to take on the job for the substantial fee of \$1050. Since the engineer's fee had to come out of the pockets of Muir and his friends, their willingness to pay the sum indicates that they had at last become aware of the importance of technical considerations in Washington's decision.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, however, they did not choose wisely in selecting Harroun as their expert.

Ballinger's show-cause order aroused Manson's combative instincts and snapped him out of his depression.



Determined to rout those he described as "the so-called nature-loving societies . . . composed largely of short-haired women and long-haired men," he looked for a way to attack his enemies. Checking into the background of Ballinger's order, he found that it was based upon an extremely negative report on Hetch Hetchy from two Reclamation Bureau engineers, E. G. Hopson and Louis C. Hill, who had been ordered to study the proposal by Secretary Ballinger after his visit to the valley in the fall of 1909. Hopson and Hill were busy men, so they in turn had passed the task on to an independent consultant, Philip Harroun, who wrote the report which bore Hopson's and Hill's names. That would have been all right, except that Harroun was at the same time working for the Spring Valley Company, which had an obvious interest in seeing the Hetch Hetchy project blocked. Harroun had failed to inform Hill and Hopson (or Muir) of this conflict of interest, but he told Manson about it in March, 1910, because he was furious that Hill and Hopson had not paid him for his report.<sup>44</sup> Of course, Manson was pleased with this information, and when Harroun, whose ethical standards seem to have been flexible at best, agreed to represent the preservationists at the May hearing, Manson felt confident that he could nullify any advantage the nature lovers might have had.

So it proved. The hearings held on May 25-27 seemed but a solemn farce played for the benefit of the public. As they began, Manson revealed his embarrassing knowledge to Secretary Ballinger, "and without waiving any rights to bring it out later on, permitted the Secretary to act as his best judgment indicated." The result of this discreet blackmail was a ruling by Ballinger on May 27 that, if it did not give the city all it wanted, undeniably blighted the preservationists' hopes for permanent protection of Hetch Hetchy. The city, Ballinger ordered, must prepare and submit to a special three-man advisory board of army engineers a new study of the Hetch Hetchy proposal and new reports on all

available alternative water supplies. On the basis of the advisory board's evaluation of these reports, the secretary would decide whether or not to permit the project to go ahead.<sup>45</sup>

Both the hearings and Ballinger's order again underscore the importance of technical considerations in determining the Hetch Hetchy project's fate. The hearings themselves were divided into two parts. One part held before the secretary himself consisted largely of dramatic and emotional statements from preservationists; the other, before the special board, concentrated on technical testimony. The preservationists clearly put their main efforts, direct testimony and the submission of extensive briefs, into the first part of the hearings. The city paid little attention to the public hearings and stressed the testimony before the special board.<sup>46</sup> These different approaches summed up each side's view of the most important issues and of the basis upon which the final decision would and should be made. The preservationists naively assumed that public ire would prevent desecration of a national park. The city's leaders recognized that there were many publics, not just one, and that the officials who had to make the final decision wanted to make it on practical, easily defensible arguments, not sentiment. Not only were the officials themselves impressed by technical arguments, but they expected that the public at large would be, too. Manson's strategy was therefore doubly clever: he discredited the preservationists' only technical witness and concentrated his own efforts as an engineer where they were most effective.

For Secretary Ballinger, the Hetch Hetchy issue represented a political minefield to be traversed with the utmost caution. Following his visit with Muir to the valley, his personal sympathies seem to have been with the preservationists, but political realism dictated caution. Having recently suffered a bruising public fight with Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot over Alaskan public land leases, Ballinger knew that the administration was



in serious trouble with westerners, among whom Pinchot's advocacy of the development of resources and multiple use of public lands was very popular, and he had no desire to worsen the situation unnecessarily during an election year.<sup>47</sup> For the secretary, the idea of postponing a decision and sharing responsibility with the special board of army engineers offered a most attractive way out of a difficult situation.

The combatants were understandably less enthusiastic about the secretary's inspiration. The preservationists, who had been confident of victory and did not know that their star witness Harroun had double-crossed them, were puzzled about the new delay of a final decision but tried to put the best possible face on the matter. "I think the outcome of our Hetch-Hetchy fight is under the circumstances the best possible," wrote John Muir hopefully, "for it seems that in a year from now the whole affair will reach a final settlement which will probably put an end to the work of thieves and robbers in the Yosemite Park. . . ." The preservationists, however, could not afford to sustain a campaign like the one they had been waging for the past two years.<sup>48</sup> For the city, on the other hand, the secretary's order meant a new, expensive study of the problem, more delays, and the possibility that a whole decade's time, money, and effort would be wasted. City officials reluctantly hired a consulting engineer recommended by President Taft, John R. Freeman, to prepare a new report, but throughout 1910 and most of 1911, they made little serious effort to get the required study under way.<sup>49</sup>

*T*he strain of the delay was especially wearing on Marsden Manson. Having for so long carried almost the full weight of the city's case, he was made more irritable and anxious by the new delay. Never very charitable to his opponents, he now lashed out at them in print as

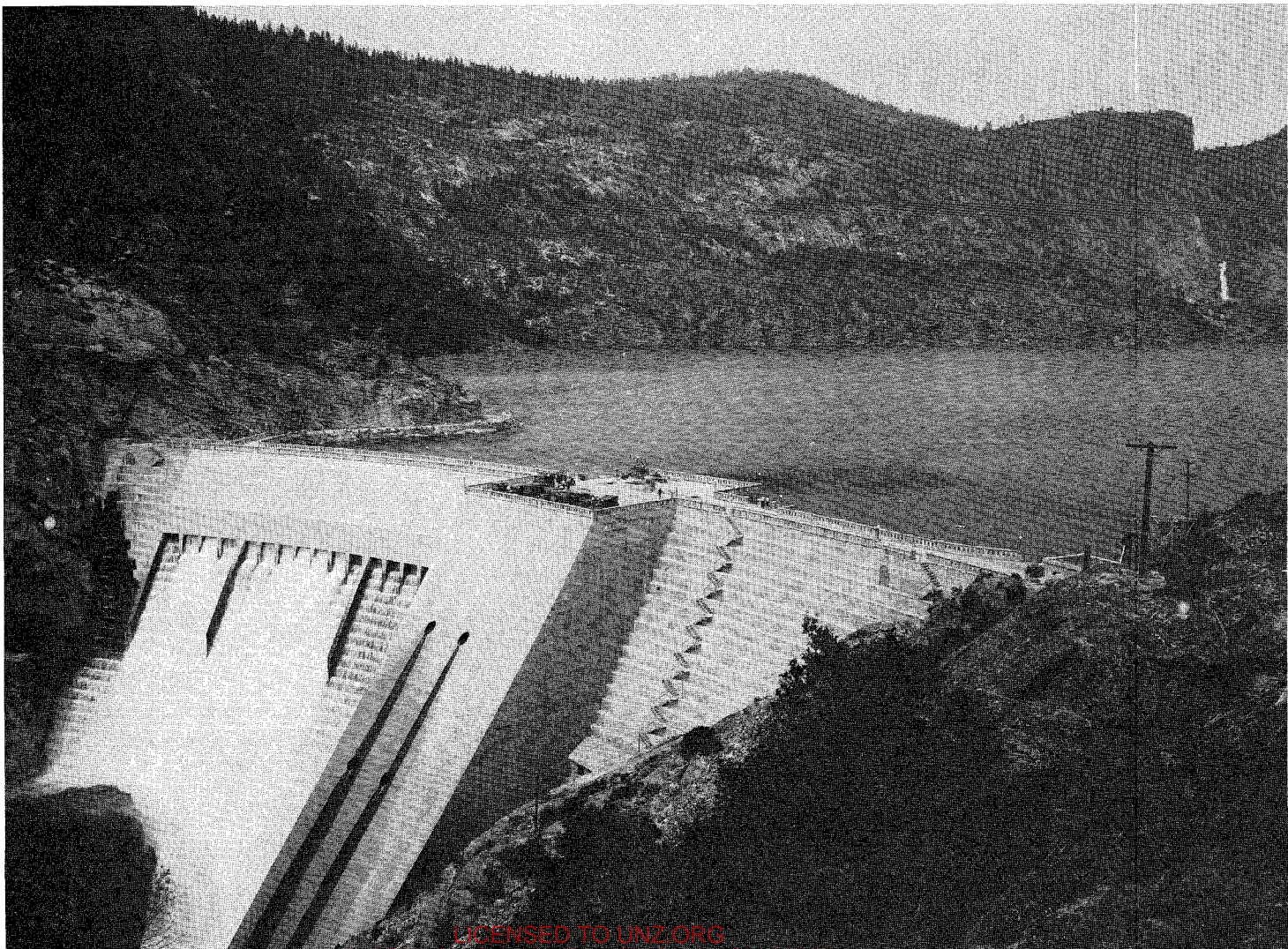
"mistaken zealots" and "catpaws" of the "grasping interests"—charges for which he had not a shred of evidence. Privately he suspected that Ballinger's show-cause order of February, 1910, had been the result of a conspiracy with the preservationists, and he drafted an intemperate letter to Theodore Roosevelt charging the former president with the "colossal blunder" of supporting the "present administration." Gifford Pinchot persuaded him not to send this diatribe which would probably have destroyed the city's case, but he did send equally bitter letters to other politicians.<sup>50</sup> By the spring of 1911, his letters had become so abusive that his old friend James Phelan warned him to exercise a little caution. "I cannot use your letter," Phelan wrote at one point, "for it would excite antagonism." "Permit me to say," he added, "that a prominent official in Washington and a friend of yours sometime since said, 'Tell Mr. Manson not to write letters as he has been doing, for his style irritates.' So I take the liberty of suggesting a more conciliatory epistolary correspondence."<sup>51</sup> This well-meant advice, however, had little effect on the engineer, whose self-control seemed to be slipping away.

By September, 1911, Manson seemed perversely bent on destroying his own case. When Secretary of the Interior Walter L. Fisher (Ballinger had resigned in March) traveled west on an inspection tour, he chose Manson as his guide to Hetch Hetchy rather than Muir, who had courted him ardently all spring.<sup>52</sup> Although this seemed the perfect opportunity for the engineer to consolidate the city's position, J. Horace McFarland, an eastern preservationist who accompanied the group, reported that Manson seemed determined to antagonize the secretary. His "prolixity of words and disposition to pass beyond the strict limits of the truth," McFarland thought, weakened Fisher's original sympathy for the city's case. In particular, the secretary was shocked by Manson's grandiose talk of damming other streams for additional storage. Skeptically he inquired, "What other





*Damming the Tuolumne gorge flooded the valley under a deep lake of fluctuating depths. Visible in the distance in the photographs showing both the dam site and the eventual dam is spectacular Wapama Falls. Note the people and cars standing atop the dam named after Manson's successor as city engineer, Maurice O'Shaughnessy.*





valleys in the Yosemite, Mr. Manson, is it the idea of the city of San Francisco to absorb?"<sup>53</sup> Listening in the background, McFarland applauded silently and concluded that all was not yet lost.

During 1912 the signs of strain which McFarland and others had noted in Manson grew more severe. As the city's long-delayed study of Hetch Hetchy and other projects finally got seriously under way, Manson reported that he was "devoting from 12 to 14 hours a day to work and then dancing attendance to Committees between 8 and 11 P.M." Such labors, he admitted, were "not conducive to that equable frame of mind desirable when undertaking difficult problems." Indeed, the engineer's judgment may have been none too sound during this period.<sup>54</sup> An earthquake-proofing plan which he approved for the Twin Peaks reservoir, for example, proved to be defective, and the structure later had to be rebuilt. San Franciscans who lived in the shadow of a leaky reservoir atop the city's highest hills and city officials who suffered Manson's outbursts of temper no doubt felt relief when the engineer finally resigned in June. Wracked by chronic insomnia and indigestion, he found it impossible to see through to final approval the project to which he had devoted his life for a dozen years. Resting and gradually recuperating at a camp in the country, he watched the final stages of the Hetch Hetchy battle with a detachment which was poignant proof of his total exhaustion.<sup>55</sup>

Manson's collapse in the summer of 1912 was not the disaster for San Francisco it might once have been because by that time others were ready to take up where he left off. His old friend Carl Grunsky filled in temporarily as city engineer until a new and enthusiastic replacement, Maurice M. O'Shaughnessy, could take over in September.<sup>56</sup> With consulting engineer John R.

Freeman, Grunsky and O'Shaughnessy put together a new and devastating presentation of the city's case. Laden with technical erudition and presented with propagandistic skill, Freeman's *Report* followed lines already well established by Manson in emphasizing the necessity and desirability of the Hetch Hetchy project and denigrating all possible alternatives. The army advisory board was bowled over by it, and so were most members of Congress who were eventually asked to approve a bill giving the city federal approval to dam and flood Hetch Hetchy Valley. With President Woodrow Wilson's signature on the Raker Act in December of 1913, Marsden Manson's long political battle was at last completed, and construction could finally begin.<sup>57</sup>

Manson's central role in the long struggle for Hetch Hetchy spanned three city and two federal administrations. In the progressive era, he and his contemporaries assumed that his dual role as expert and political mover was not only normal but highly desirable. It represented a mechanism by which the abuses of corrupt politicians and special interests could be checked and urban government made to serve the needs of the people.

Or was it? As historian Samuel P. Hays has pointed out, there was a marked contrast between the era's "ideology of a popular upheaval against a selfish few" and its practice of "shaping the structure of municipal government so that political power would no longer be broadly distributed, but would in fact be more centralized in the hands of a relatively small segment of the population."<sup>58</sup> In effect, Hays argues, progressive-era municipal reform was a device for shifting political power from lower and middle class politicians to upper-middle and upper class business leaders, technicians, and professionals—men who exercised an enormous economic influence in their society but felt politically impotent. The rhetoric of their struggle was democratic and anti-business, but its reality was elitist.

The Hetch Hetchy controversy, however, does not fit Hays' theory any better than it fits the idealized con-

ception of an unselfish crusade by the majority against the privileged few. On both sides there existed elements of selfishness and altruism, and what is more, the contest crossed class and interest lines.

Even two generations later it is difficult to determine to what extent participants in the struggle were motivated by selfish and unselfish concerns. The Spring Valley company's motives were perhaps the clearest, in that the company consistently followed economic self-interest and switched sides according to its estimate of where profit lay. All other participants were led by murkier combinations of motives. Muir and the preservationists certainly fought for the recreational and aesthetic interests of future generations, but surely they were influenced also by their selfish desire to save for their own enjoyment a choice hiking and camping area that few other Americans had ever seen. Manson and other engineers on the project were moved partly by a conviction that they were serving the city's interests and partly by such base emotions as stubbornness and vindictiveness and ambition. Phelan, Giannini, and other businessmen favoring the dam proposal sought partly to benefit all San Franciscans and partly to increase their own profits by encouraging urban growth. Hays' analysis is useful in stripping away the mask of disinterested altruism with which progressive-era reformers often cloaked common human motives, but it runs the risk of substituting one oversimplification for another.

Equally, it should be noted that the Hetch Hetchy issue was not an issue used by the new elite against the old politicians. In San Francisco, the reformers had nearly defeated the old regime before Hetch Hetchy became an issue, though the Schmitz administration marked a brief resurgence of the old ways. The water debate was more a quarrel among the victors than a part of the war between the reformers and the old guard, and members of the professional elite led both sides. Many of them were members of the Sierra Club or the Commonwealth Club, and they shared common back-

grounds, educations, and values. Doubtless this was partly why they found their differences so perplexing and aggravating. Contrary to what Hays seems to suggest, victory by the progressives did not guarantee their unity on subsequent issues.

Finally, the implication in Hays' argument that the rise of a professional elite to power meant that the broader public's interests were sacrificed to the aims of the privileged few is unfounded in this case. Rather, the Hetch Hetchy debate suggests that the professionals were far more aware of the importance of the issue than the old-style politicians like Schmitz and that they were more able to understand and more willing to articulate the issues for the public than traditional politicians. Rather than eliminating public debate, the rise of the progressive elite in San Francisco opened a whole new area for public discussion.

Another interpretive theory which needs to be supplemented in light of the Hetch Hetchy case is J. Leonard Bates' argument that the concept uniting the progressive conservation movement was "hatred of the boodler, the rank materialist, the exploiter."<sup>59</sup> Such rhetoric was used, but what public figures would admit admiration of boodlers, materialists, and exploiters? Thus, it is important to look closely at what progressive conservationists did as well as what they said. The Hetch Hetchy controversy demonstrated that bitter differences rankled within the conservation movement on the matter of goals. Between Gifford Pinchot's contention that "the first principle of conservation is development, the use of natural resources now existing on this continent for the benefit of the people who live here now," and John Muir's belief that Hetch Hetchy should be kept in natural wildness forever was an unbridgeable gulf fully as great as that between the boodlers and the conservationists.<sup>60</sup> Because progressive conservationists, too, often defined their aim only as opposition to wasteful exploitation, it is understandable that each faction felt that the other must share its viewpoint unless it had



sold out. Bates' interpretation does not take account of the division between developmental and preservationist conservationists, nor explain why the developmental conservationists were more influential than the preservationists. Conservation as Pinchot defined it was popular with most politicians during the progressive period because it sounded democratic and responsible without threatening any important interests or calling for any sacrifices. Muir's Hetch Hetchy position, on the other hand, raised disquieting questions about the purposes of conservation, threatened vested interests, and challenged the comfortable assumption that development guaranteed progress. Small wonder that most political leaders were more comfortable with Pinchot and Manson than with Muir.

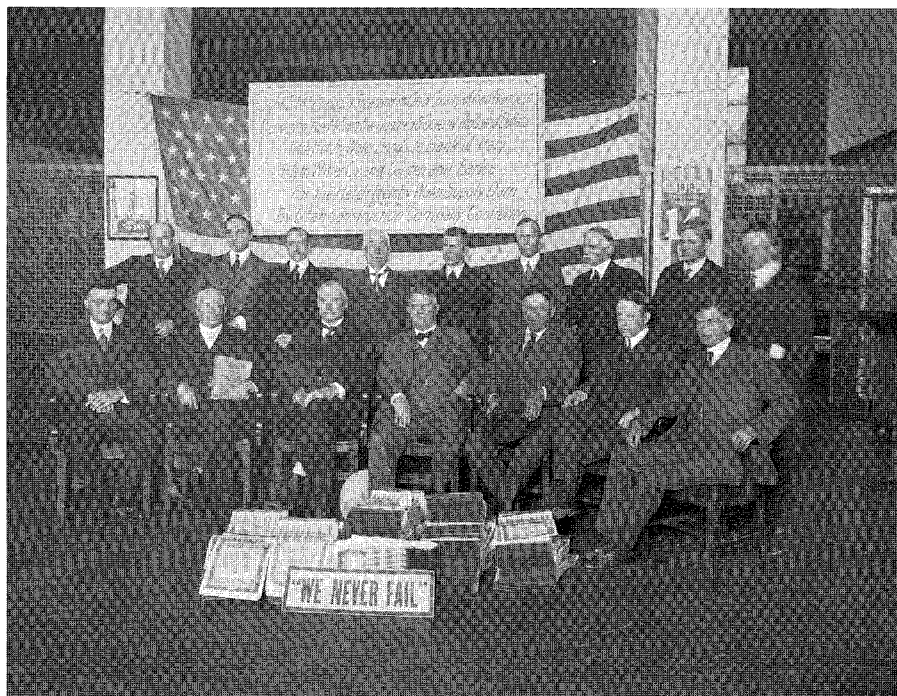
Marsden Manson was well able to exploit the national political climate on the Hetch Hetchy issue. As an engineer, he commanded the credentials of an expert planner of development; his personal zeal and tireless lobbying made him an effective political force. Equally important was the fact that both the Roosevelt and Taft administrations came under fire, especially from westerners, for withdrawing too many resources from development. Both presidents were eager to show their concern for the West's interests, and the Hetch Hetchy proposal offered them a dramatic opportunity to do so. How better could they indicate sympathy for the West's chronic water problems than by turning over a useless valley in a national park to the city of San Francisco? Theodore Roosevelt apparently agreed from the outset with Gifford Pinchot that unless the people of California opposed the development, it ought to be permitted. Taft, on the other hand, argued that he could not approve the project unless Congress specifically mandated it. In fact, he found himself in danger of having to disapprove it and alienate the West, though there is no

evidence he had strong personal objections to it.<sup>61</sup> In the end, however, both presidents chose to base their policy on the advice and guidance of the technical experts. In so doing, they cleared their consciences, satisfied a large part of the public which was greatly impressed by technical arguments, and of course played straight into the hands of Marsden Manson. Thus, the combination of the national political climate, the prevailing admiration for the opinions of the technical expert, and the vigor and expertise of Manson worked together to give the city what it had sought.

The opponents of the Hetch Hetchy project never really grasped the crucial function of the experts in the political process. Thus they misunderstood, or worse, ignored the experts' arguments; they made elementary technical blunders; they seldom sought competent technical advice; and they defended the wilderness with a romantic and aesthetic argument which made them vulnerable to charges of sentimentality and elitism. Three decades later the distinguished naturalist Aldo Leopold would begin to develop "a philosophical, religious and ethical point of view based on pragmatic scientific grounds" which would have offered a far better argument for the preservation of Hetch Hetchy than the "mystical intimacy with nature" advocated by John Muir and his allies in this struggle—but by then the valley was deep under water.<sup>62</sup>

Of course, the preservationists could not present an ecological argument which did not yet exist, so for the most part they relied on lobbying and on keeping "letters flying in a country-wide storm thick as snowflakes," as Muir put it.<sup>63</sup> This approach was sound in theory, but it failed here because the massive public outrage on which Muir counted did not materialize. The developmental and technical arguments advanced by the city engineers were more familiar and persuasive to most people.

Because the idea of conservation was new to the generation a step away from the frontiersman's constant



By 1919, a bond issue had secured \$5,570,000 for construction of the Hetch Hetchy dam. Here, graced by a sign noting the city's determination, city officials including engineer O'Shaughnessy (front row, third from left) commemorate the sale of the bonds. The dam was completed in 1923.

war with nature, conservationists tended to assume they all wanted the same things. Muir and Manson both remained active members of the Sierra Club throughout most of the controversy, and each seemed to hope that the other might be won over to his point of view.<sup>64</sup> Adding further to the confusion was the lofty rhetoric of progressivism.<sup>65</sup> Only when preservationists were forced to choose between wilderness or progress, as in the Hetch Hetchy case, did a basic disagreement become apparent, and neither side was really ready to cope with the implications of that discovery. For most Americans, the idea of slowing urban industrialization to save a bit of wilderness was inconceivable, and even Muir and his followers were more Luddites than prophets of ecology. Having dared to attack the sacred notions of progress and development, they had little to offer in their place except mystical romanticism.

The problem posed by the Hetch Hetchy confrontation did not disappear with the flooding of the valley. Obscured for the moment, it has consistently reemerged as one of the major issues confronting twentieth-century Americans: Is the nation's natural heritage sufficiently valuable to be worth preserving at the cost of restricting growth and development? Our own generation may understand the question more clearly than our grandfathers did, but we, like they, find it hard to accept the material sacrifices that preservation requires.

The opening photograph of the Sierra Club and the 1903 view of Hetch Hetchy are courtesy the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. The Manson portrait is reproduced from the *Overland Monthly*, August, 1906, page 19. All the other photographs are from the CHS Library.

## Notes

1. David W. Noble, *The Progressive Mind, 1890-1917* (Chicago, 1970), pp. 37-47; Samuel Haber, *Efficiency and Uplift: Scientific Management in the Progressive Era, 1890-1920* (Chicago, 1964), pp. ix-x, 104-116.
2. Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Atheneum ed., N.Y., 1966).
3. J. Leonard Bates, "Fulfilling American Democracy: The Conservation Movement, 1907 to 1921," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 44 (June, 1957): 29-57.
4. Striking if inexact parallels exist between Manson's role in this issue and that of Frederick Law Olmsted in an earlier period. See the stimulating essay by Geoffrey Blodgett, "Frederick Law Olmsted: Landscape Architecture as Conservative Reform," *Journal of American History*, 62 (March, 1976): 869-889.
5. The evidence about Manson's family background is confusing. Two autobiographical notes preserved in a file of Manson letters and other documents in the Registrar's Office at Virginia Military Institute are contradictory. One identifies Manson's father as Nathaniel J. Manson, a lawyer, the other as Robert Emmet Manson. The first further identifies R. E. Manson as Marsden Manson's brother; the second says that Nathaniel Manson was Marsden's paternal grandfather.
6. A general biography of Manson is in *Who Was Who in America*,



- I, 1897-1942 (Chicago, 1942), p. 774. The review by F. H. Knowlton appeared in *Science*, 56 (September 1, 1922): 254-255. Copies of the book and of Manson's other scientific papers are in the Marsden Manson Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.
7. For a detailed description of Manson's mountain travels, see Manson to Professor [?] McAdie, December 9, 1907, Manson Papers.
8. For the early history of the club, see Marshall Kuhn, "The Sierra Club: Remembering the Early Years," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 60 (August/September 1975): 34-37; Holway R. Jones, *John Muir and the Sierra Club: The Battle for Yosemite* (San Francisco, 1965), p. 94.
9. *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1893-1894* (San Francisco, 1894), Appendix, pp. 153-179; Ad hoc Committee of Engineers (including Manson and eleven others) to Erving M. Scott, Chairman of Committee on Management of Public Works of Board of Supervisors, January 25, 1895, Grunsky Family Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley.
10. Phelan was a member of a socially prominent San Francisco family, and the alliance of these people with professional experts again suggests the theme of reformist elitism. See also Haber, *Efficiency and Uplift*, pp. 101-107.
11. This sketch of Manson's personality is pieced together from the Manson Papers.
12. Ray W. Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy: The Story of San Francisco's Struggle to Provide a Water Supply for Her Future Needs* (San Francisco, 1926), pp. 14-25; *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1871-1872* (San Francisco, 1872), Appendix, pp. 626-640; *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1874-1875* (San Francisco, 1875), Appendix, pp. 613-723. By 1880, the city was paying 25 percent of its annual income for water, which helps to explain both the bitterness of rate fights and the interest of the city in alternate sources.
13. *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Year 1900-1901* (San Francisco, 1901), pp. 409-423.
14. *Twenty-First Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey, Charles D. Walcott, Director, 1899-1900*, Part IV, *Hydrography* (Washington, 1901), pp. 449-465. For the earlier proposals, see *Hetch Hetchy Dam Site: Hearing before the Committee on the Public Lands, House of Representatives, 63 Cong., 1 Sess., on H.R. 6281* (Washington, 1913), p. 102; *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1893-1894*, App., pp. 170-171; *Eleventh Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey to the Secretary of the Interior, 1889-1890*, by J. W. Powell, Director, Part II, *Irrigation* (Washington, 1891), p. 157; *Twelfth Annual Report of the United States Geological Survey to the Secretary of the Interior, by J.W. Powell, Director, Part II, Irrigation* (Washington, 1892), pp. 31-32, 36-37; *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1900-1901*, pp. 227-427.
15. *21st Annual Report, Geological Survey*, p. 450; Grunsky's Note-book, 1900 (entries for September 20-October 4) in Grunsky Family Papers.
16. *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Year 1902-1903* (San Francisco, 1904), pp. 402-471.
17. The origins of the Right of Way Act of February 15, 1901, are obscure. Although it certainly benefitted San Francisco, no definite evidence suggests the city originated it. It was sponsored by Representative Marion DeVries of Stockton, who maintained it was intended to reconcile conflicts among various existing laws. Legislation of this sort was requested by the secretary of the interior in 1899, before the Hetch Hetchy project was conceived. See *Report of the Secretary of the Interior, Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior, 1899* (Washington, 1899), pp. xii-xiii; *Report No. 1850, "Rights of Way through Certain Parks, etc."*, 56 Cong., 1 Sess., U.S. Congress, House, *Reports; Miscellaneous* (Washington, 1900). Historians have suspected collusion between DeVries and city officials, but very likely DeVries was more concerned with providing irrigation water for his constituents than drinking water for San Francisco. See John Ise, *Our National Park Policy: A Critical History* (Baltimore, 1961), pp. 68-69, 78, 113-114; Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 89-90.
18. Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, p. 48; *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1902-1903*, p. 353; Walton Bean, *Boss Ruef's San Francisco: The Story of the Union Labor Party, Big Business, and the Graft Prosecution* (Berkeley, 1952), p. 270.
19. Board of Supervisors, City of San Francisco, *Reports on the Water Supply of San Francisco, California, 1900 to 1908, Inclusive* (San Francisco, 1908), pp. 128-133; Ise, *Our National Park Policy*, pp. 69-70.
20. *Who Was Who in America, I, 1897-1942*, p. 492; C. E. Grunsky, "The Water Supply of San Francisco, Cal.," *Journal of the Association of Engineering Societies*, 41 (1908): 83-85; *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Year 1903-1904* (San Francisco, 1905), pp. 384-386; Manson to James D. Phelan, November 10, 1906, Manson Papers; M. Nelson McGeary, *Gifford Pinchot: Forester-Politician* (Princeton, 1960), p. 74.
21. *Reports on the Water Supply . . . 1908*, pp. 112-148 (Moody's letter of October 28, 1905 is quoted on p. 148); Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, pp. 68-69.
22. *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Year 1904-1905* (San Francisco, 1907), pp. 347, 374; Special Committee on Water Supply (Jennings J. Phillips, James L. Gallagher, Charles Boxtton, James F. Kelly, Edward Walsh), "Report on Water Supply from the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Received and Adopted October 8, 1906" [San Francisco, 1906], pp. 9-10; Manson to City Engineer Thomas P. Woodward, February 7, 1906, Manson Papers. An earlier Bay Cities proposal, involving sources in Santa Clara County south of San Francisco Bay, had been investigated and rejected by Grunsky in February of

1904. See *San Francisco Municipal Reports, 1903-1904*, pp. 391-405.
23. *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Years 1905-1906, 1906-1907* (San Francisco, 1908), Appendix, pp. 779-786; Manson to Phelan, April 19, 1906, James D. Phelan Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley; "Report on Water Supply . . . , 1906," pp. 10-16; Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, pp. 63-66.
  24. Franklin K. Lane to Phelan, September 27, 1906, Phelan Papers; Commonwealth Club of California, "Water Supply for San Francisco," *Transactions*, 2 (San Francisco, 1907): 340 (on this page are copies of Gifford Pinchot to Manson, May 18, November 15, 1906); Bean, *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*, p. 162.
  25. McGeary, *Pinchot*, pp. 69-85, 95-99.
  26. Manson to Phelan, November 10, 1906, Manson Papers; Commonwealth Club, "Water Supply for San Francisco," pp. 275-340. No one actually filed on Hetch Hetchy, but there was one filing on subsidiary reservoir sites at Cherry Valley and Lake Eleanor which the city subsequently had to purchase. See William Hammond Hall to Phelan, November 7, 1907, Phelan Papers; "Summary of Conclusions arrived at by C. D. Marx and J. D. Galloway, Consulting Engineers to the City Engineer of San Francisco, in the matter of appraising the value of certain claims by parties represented by William Hammond Hall at Lake Eleanor and on Eleanor Creek," July 25, 1909, Manson Papers.
  27. Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, pp. 70-71; Phelan to Mayor E. R. Taylor, July 23, 1908, Phelan Papers.
  28. *Reports on the Water Supply . . . , 1908*, pp. 148-210.
  29. Phelan to Charles D. Holcomb (member of the Board of Public Works), November 8, 1907; Grunsky to Phelan, December 17, 1907; Phelan to Grunsky, December 30, 1907; Manson to Phelan, December 14, 1907, all in Phelan Papers; Clippings from *San Francisco Bulletin*, January 16, 1908; *San Francisco Star*, January 11, 1908; *San Francisco Commercial News*, January 10, 1908, all in Manson Papers. Manson's salary was \$7000 a year; he had expected \$8000 and was angry not to get it. See Board of Public Works to Manson, June 24, 1908; Manson to Allan Pollock (Member, Board of Supervisors), May 23, 1908, both in Manson Papers.
  30. Edward R. Taylor to Board of Supervisors, April 24, 1908; Lewis L. Dennett (attorney for Modesto Irrigation District) to Manson, September 25, 1908; Copies of reports from Manson to Board of Public Works dated June 4, 21, July 23, September 4, 1908, all in Manson Papers; Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, pp. 76-83.
  31. Muir to William Colby, December 30, 1908, William Colby Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley. See also Colby to Robert Underwood Johnson, August 17, 1908; Gifford Pinchot to Colby, February 11, 1905, both in Robert Underwood Johnson Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley; Muir to Colby, May 23, December 24, December 31, 1908, January 25, 1909, John Muir Papers, Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley; Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 91-97.
  32. On the professions of Sierra Club members, see Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*. For the effect of political considerations on Theodore Roosevelt, see Elmo R. Richardson, *The Politics of Conservation: Crusades and Controversies, 1897-1913* (Berkeley, 1962), p. 44.
  33. Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 95-96. The inability of opponents to make even rough cost estimates on technical issues prevented them from realizing that city engineers were consistently underestimating the cost of the Hetch Hetchy project. Manson estimated in 1909 that the project would cost \$45 million; by 1934, when the first water actually reached the city, its cost was \$100 million. See Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, p. 112; *Time*, October 22, 1934, p. 16. Cities on the east side of San Francisco Bay, originally included in the Hetch Hetchy project, became disillusioned with its cost and slow conclusion in the 1920s and developed their own project based on the Mokelumne River. By the late 1920s, this system, built at a much lower cost than Hetch Hetchy, was in operation. See clippings from the *Berkeley Gazette*, April 20, 1923, January 21, 1925, and January 1, 1926, all in Manson Papers.
  34. M. M. O'Shaughnessy, *Hetch Hetchy: Its Origin and History* (San Francisco, 1934), pp. 33-36; Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 103-104; Marsden Manson, "A Statement of San Francisco's Side of the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir Matter, December 30, 1909" (San Francisco, 1909), p. 5. Manson's pamphlet was addressed to his fellow members of the Sierra Club.
  35. Colby to Johnson, August 17, 1908, Johnson Papers; Muir to Colby, December 30, 1908, Colby Papers. See also Acting Secretary of the Interior Frank Pierce to Manson, September 8, 1908, Manson Papers; Muir to Colby, May 23, December 24, December 31, 1908, Muir Papers.
  36. Manson to W. A. Mason, February 19, 1909; A. H. Giannini and Manson to Board of Supervisors, April 5, 1909, both in Manson Papers; House of Representatives, Committee on the Public Lands, *Hearings: San Francisco and the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir* (Washington, 1909); Senate, Committee on Public Lands, *Hearing: Hetch Hetchy Reservoir Site* (Washington, 1909).
  37. Manson to Board of Supervisors, April 5, 1909; Report of City Engineer to Board of Public Works, November 11, 1909, both in Manson Papers; Phelan to R. D. McElroy, January 25, 1909, Phelan Papers; *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Year 1908-1909* (San Francisco, 1910), p. 387; *Ibid.*, Appendix, pp. 1418-1432; Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, p. 100.
  38. Muir to Johnson, October 27, 1909, Johnson Papers; Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 105-109.



39. Manson to James R. Garfield, November 1, 1909, January 24, 1910; Manson to George W. Woodruff, January 4, 1910; Manson to Gifford Pinchot, January 9, 1910, all in Manson Papers. See also the pamphlet, Union Labor Party County Committee, San Francisco Labor Council, San Francisco Building Trades Council, "Water Bonds: A Brief and Candid Statement of Facts," *ibid.*; *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Year 1909-1910* (San Francisco, 1911), pp. 547-548.
40. Colby to Johnson, December 8, 1907, Johnson Papers; Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 96-98, 109-120.
41. *Proceedings before the Secretary of the Interior in re Use of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir Site in the Yosemite National Park by the City of San Francisco* (Washington, 1910), p. 6.
42. Colby to J. H. McFarland, March 3, 1910, Colby Papers; Muir to Colby, March 5, 1910, Muir Papers.
43. Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 103-104, 124.
44. Manson to G. W. Woodruff, April 6, March 24, April 13, 1910; E. G. Hopson to George Otis Smith, November 23, 1909; Louis C. Hill to George Otis Smith, February 7, 1910; Manson to S. M. Stockslager, March 1, 3, 1910; Manson to James D. Phelan, March 3, 1910; Manson to City Attorney Percy V. Long, March 26, 1910, all in Manson Papers; *Proceedings before the Secretary of the Interior*, pp. 7-9.
45. Manson to James R. Garfield, June 18, 1910, Manson Papers.
46. In *Proceedings before the Secretary of the Interior*, this imbalance is obvious. Preservationist testimony takes up about twenty-four of the thirty pages of testimony before the secretary himself, but only six of the eighteen pages of testimony before the Special Advisory Board.
47. Elmo R. Richardson, "The Struggle for the Valley: California's Hetch Hetchy Controversy, 1905-1913," *California Historical Quarterly*, 37 (September, 1959): 253-254.
48. Muir to Colby, May 31, 1910, Muir Papers. For the puzzled reactions of other preservationists, see *Proceedings before the Secretary of the Interior*, pp. 62-63.
49. *San Francisco Municipal Reports for the Fiscal Year 1910-1911* (San Francisco, 1912), p. 893; Manson to James R. Garfield, October 14, 1910; Manson to Rudolph Spreckels, April 19, 1911; J. D. Galloway to Mayor Beverly Hodghead (Berkeley), April 27, 1911; Hodghead to Manson, May 2, 1911; Manson to Hodghead, May 3, 1911, all in Manson Papers.
50. Marsden Manson, "San Francisco's Side of the Hetch Hetchy Matter," *Twentieth Century Magazine*, 44 (1910): 270-274; Manson to Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, July 19, 1910; Gifford Pinchot to Manson, July 26, 1910; Manson to S. M. Stockslager, September 27, 1910, all in Manson Papers.
51. Phelan to Manson, May 24, 1911, Manson Papers. For examples of Manson's correspondence of the period, see Manson to Ralph W. Hershey, December 21, 1911, and two drafts of Manson to W. H. Taft, January 22, 1911, all in *ibid.*
52. Muir to Colby, March 23, 31, May 8, 1911, Muir Papers; Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 127-128.
53. McFarland to Colby, September 28, 1911, quoted at length in Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 128-130.
54. Manson to John R. Freeman, January 24, 1912, Manson Papers.
55. Manson to Phelan, December 18, 1912, March 11, 1913; Manson to G. W. Woodruff, August 4, 1912, all in Manson Papers; Taylor, *Hetch Hetchy*, pp. 122-123. O'Shaughnessy, *Hetch Hetchy*, pp. 22-26. It seems probable that Manson suffered a nervous breakdown during this period.
56. Ironically, O'Shaughnessy, not Manson, was remembered in San Francisco as the father of the Hetch Hetchy project. He supervised its construction, and the dam which was the key-stone of the system was named for him. When the first Hetch Hetchy water arrived in San Francisco in October of 1934, O'Shaughnessy, who had recently died, was the hero of the moment, and Manson was forgotten. See *Time*, October 22, 1934, pp. 16-18.
57. John R. Freeman, *A Report on the Proposed Use of the Hetch Hetchy, Eleanor and Cherry Valleys within and Near to the Boundaries of the Stanislaus U.S. National Forest Reserve and the Yosemite National Park as Reservoirs for Impounding Tuolumne River Flood Waters and Appurtenant Works for the Water Supply of San Francisco, California, and Neighboring Cities* (San Francisco July 15, 1912); *Hetch Hetchy Valley: Report of the Advisory Board of Army Engineers to the Secretary of the Interior on Investigations Relative to Sources of Water Supply for the San Francisco and Bay Communities* (Washington, February 19, 1913); Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 134-168.
58. Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," in David M. Kennedy, ed., *Progressivism: The Critical Issues* (Boston, 1971), p. 105.
59. Bates, "Fulfilling American Democracy," p. 38.
60. Gifford Pinchot, *The Fight for Conservation* (Americana Reprint of 1910 edition, Seattle, 1967), p. 43.
61. Paolo E. Coletta, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft* (Lawrence, Kans., 1973), pp. 77-100.
62. See John Opie's introduction to a selection from Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* in Opie, ed., *Americans and Environment: The Controversy over Ecology* (Lexington, Mass., 1971), p. 45.
63. Muir to Johnson, October 16, 1913, Johnson Papers.
64. Jones, *Muir and the Sierra Club*, pp. 94, 110.
65. The rapidity with which the conservation movement grew and its absorption into progressivism did not encourage the development of a broad philosophical base. On the divergent trends in progressive conservation, see James Penick, Jr., "The Progressives and the Environment: Three Themes from the First Conservation Movement," in Lewis L. Gould, *The Progressive Era* (Syracuse, 1974), pp. 115-131.

# HORATIO NELSON RUST

## abolitionist, archaeologist, indian agent



*Rust, Mrs. Thaddeus Lowe, and photographers C. J. Crandall and A. C. Vroman trekked to Arizona in 1895 to witness the renowned Hopi Snake Dance at Walpi. The team they hired at Holbrook pulled 1500 pounds of camping and photographic baggage. Vroman made this photograph.*



At the turn of the century, Pasadena and its neighboring Arroyo Seco attracted some remarkable settlers—people of talent, enterprise, and occasional flamboyance. Many were writers who became propagandists for California and the Southwest, among them Charles F. Lummis and George Wharton James. A surprising number shared an interest in the culture of the American Indian and became advocates of Indian rights and collectors of tribal artifacts.

One of these early Pasadenans was Horatio Nelson Rust, who was nationally known as an amateur archaeologist and a discerning collector of Native American relics. He considered himself a champion of Indian rights and served a term as federal agent to the Mission and Tule River Indians. With boundless enthusiasm, he also labored as pioneer nurseryman, California booster, and a tireless promoter of the civic good.

Rust wrote no books and left no legacy such as Lummis's Southwest Museum. Today his contributions are largely forgotten, but something of his spirit has been preserved in an essay written by Oliver Wendell Holmes, who met Rust during the Civil War and described him as "a really kind, good man, full of zeal, determined to help somebody."<sup>1</sup>

An eighth-generation New Englander, Rust was born in 1828 in Amherst, Massachusetts. A childhood gift of a prehistoric stone axe inspired his lifelong interest in Indian artifacts, and a visit with his father to the prisoners of the slave ship *Amistad* inalterably convinced him of the horrors of slavery.

Nineteen years old when his father died, Rust abandoned thoughts of further education and went to work, first as a carpenter, then as an edge-tool maker and a machinist. Later he studied medicine with a country

doctor, and for about ten years he was a druggist in Collinsville, Connecticut, where in 1857 he met the radical abolitionist John Brown, who was visiting relatives nearby.

A Free-Soil Republican eager to assist the anti-slavery cause, Rust helped raise money for Brown and rode with him to buy wagons and other supplies for the free-state settlers in Kansas. He also helped secure a contract for the manufacture of a thousand pikes which Brown thought "would make a cheap and efficient weapon with which even a woman could defend her cabin door against man or beast."<sup>2</sup> Brown never used the pikes in Kansas, as he first intended, but stockpiled them instead at a Maryland farm, where they were confiscated after his raid on Harpers Ferry.

Brown's family was grateful to Rust for salvaging the memorial stone which once marked the grave of John Brown's grandfather, a soldier in the Revolution. The same stone now bears the names of the old patriot and of John Brown and three of his sons (one killed in Kansas and two at Harpers Ferry)—"a list of five Browns in one family," Rust commented, "who gave up their lives in helping to secure the liberties of the people."<sup>3</sup>

Over a period of nearly fifty years, Rust helped raise money for the Brown family. To a friend he wrote, "I remember when Capt. Brown was near his execution. He said to our representative who visited him in prison, 'My only anxiety is for my family.' The reply (a proper one) was *we* (meaning those of us who had encouraged and helped him) will take care of the family. I have always felt that the promise rested upon me, and I have not forgotten it."<sup>4</sup> Brown's daughter Ruth acknowledged to Rust, "*You* of all the friends and admirers of John Brown have stood by his children, through all circumstances. You have been *true as truth* itself."<sup>5</sup> Ruth and her brothers Jason and Owen all moved to the Pasadena area, perhaps because of Rust's support.

As a Civil War medical volunteer, Rust traveled by wagon to Antietam in the company of Oliver Wendell

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The author thanks CHS Librarian Gary F. Kurutz, whose talk on Rust inspired the article and whose suggestions helped shape it.

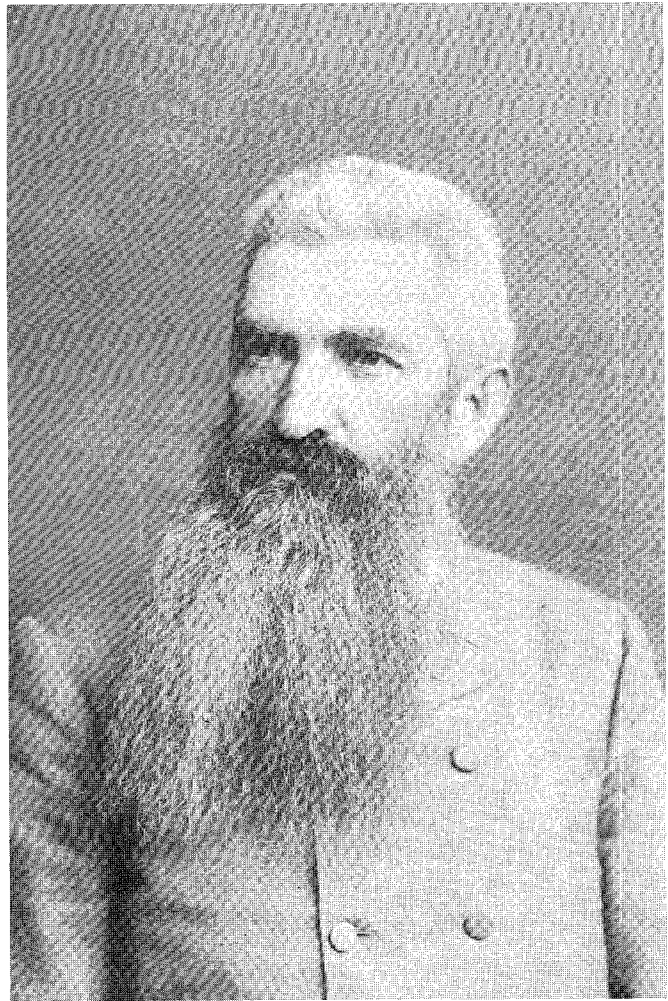
*Oliver Wendell Holmes described  
Horatio Nelson Rust as a respectable  
New Englander with a hay-bearded face.  
Rust was about 78 when this  
photograph was taken.*

Holmes who was searching for his wounded son. In an essay about the journey, Holmes described Rust as “a New Englander of respectable appearance, with grave, hard, honest, hay-bearded face.”<sup>6</sup> Holmes poked mild fun at Rust’s singleminded sense of duty, later admitting that the sketch was perhaps “a little sharp in one or two expressions. . . . But you saw that I felt a real respect for yourself and your errand.”<sup>7</sup>

At the battlefield, Rust dressed wounds, helped with amputations, drove an ambulance, and arranged transport home for the wounded. He served under the auspices of the Christian Commission but wrote impatiently to his wife, “Decayed clergymen are among the greatest nuisance we have here. . . . Our managers are men who know nothing of business and expect to do it by praying and preaching.”<sup>8</sup> In situations where there seemed to be little organization or direction, Rust showed initiative and resourcefulness and “took hold so handy”<sup>9</sup> that he won praise from the chief surgeon. Undoubtedly he deserved the title of Major Rust which he adopted in later years.

In 1875 Rust moved to Chicago with his wife Fidelia and their four children. He operated the city’s largest warehouse and for a time served as secretary of the Chicago Relief Association, which collected money and goods for the freed black emigrants to Kansas. Among other fund-raising activities, he arranged a lecture tour by the Rev. Josiah Henson, who had been Harriet Beecher Stowe’s model for Uncle Tom.<sup>10</sup> The great Quaker reformer Elizabeth Comstock called Rust a man of sound common sense and assured him, “We rely upon thy judgment *entirely* . . . concerning the refugees, & the shipments for their benefit.”<sup>11</sup>

Wherever he lived, Rust pursued his lifelong interest in archaeology. As a traveling salesman in New York and New England, he visited abandoned Indian sites and purchased relics discovered there. After moving to Chicago, he learned about a pottery find in Missouri and hurried to the site. He unearthed numerous stone



implements and some 2000 clay vessels which he reported on at meetings of the Chicago Academy of Science and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Eventually he sold most of the artifacts to Yale and the University of Pennsylvania, but he sent a few pieces to Wendell Phillips to be sold for the benefit of the historic Old South Meeting House.

In 1878 Rust traveled up the Missouri River—an account of Lewis and Clark’s expedition in hand—and brought back ornaments, pipes, and stone hammers used by the Indians. The next year, as historian of the trade delegation to Mexico, he presented some of his Dakota and Missouri finds to Mexico’s National Museum, which had no specimens from the United States. On his return from Mexico with a rich collection of Aztec antiquities, he lectured “before literary and scientific associations, holding the closest attention of his audience for an hour and a quarter, or more.”<sup>12</sup>

In 1881, the fifty-three-year-old Rust made a pre-



liminary visit to California looking for "good soil, pure water, a better climate . . . and a respectable community."<sup>13</sup> Finding all these in Pasadena, he moved his family there the following year, and they settled on Monterey Road (now in South Pasadena), on thirty-five acres of land for which Rust paid \$80 an acre. He and his young son Edward planted seeds from oranges gathered in a nearby grove, and in two years they had 20,000 seedlings ready for budding to the Washington navel orange and the Eureka lemon. This was the beginning of the family's nursery, which continued in business for sixty years.

Soon Rust was sending exuberant dispatches to the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* and other eastern papers for which he became a special correspondent. "The ornamental trees and shrubbery grow in a most reckless manner,"<sup>14</sup> he reported. "Sunstroke is unknown here and lightning is so faint and seldom seen as to be a novelty. . . . We are remarkably exempt from malaria and insects, and may live in the open air all year round."<sup>15</sup> About the wildlife he observed, "We have deer near in the mountains, rabbits everywhere, quail by the thousands, wildcats, and cayotes [sic], a small wolf, are plenty—not dangerous but very musical at night. The panther, or so-called California lion, has been killed in this colony several times, but are very shy."<sup>16</sup>

In 1882 Pasadenans formed an association to build a public library, an effort they proudly announced was "the first movement of its kind in Southern California."<sup>17</sup> As one of the association's directors, Rust solicited the advice of librarians around the country. In answer to one question, Columbia University's Melvil Dewey advised him, "A separate reading room for ladies has often been tried but very little used. It adds to the cost of running the Library without a corresponding gain. Ladies who read seem to object to being shut off in a separate room."<sup>18</sup>

Rust energetically raised funds for the library; in fact, his fellow directors called him the enthusiast of the

board. He gave a slide talk which netted \$21.50, he lent Indian artifacts to an exhibition which brought in \$272.46, and he served on the committee for the library's most successful fund raising project—a citrus fair, held in 1885 in the town's roller-skating rink, which made a profit of \$531. To advertise the event, the committee published a ninety-two page pamphlet which not only promoted the fair but listed all the books in the library and sang the praises of Pasadena as an ideal place for "the sober, industrious, and intelligent."<sup>19</sup>

In 1886 Rust became a driving force behind an ambitious citrus fair held in Chicago. As a Commissioner of Immigration for Southern California, he anticipated that easterners would flock to California after sampling its fruits. About 50,000 people attended the fair and enjoyed such wonders as the first grove of producing orange trees ever seen in Chicago. Many visitors had their first taste of the navel orange, whose name, Rust thought, should be changed to California Seedless. "It is not always pleasant," he remarked, "to call attention in polite society to a name which would be used with perfect propriety in the medical schools."<sup>20</sup>

Making a career of boosting Southern California, Rust became superintendent of a Southern California fruit exhibit held in St. Louis in 1887 at the same time as a Grand Army of the Republic encampment. He had fruit delivered to distinguished visitors like General William Tecumseh Sherman and made certain that the newspapers reported both the gift and the recipient's appreciative response. Rust also arranged for a carload of grapes to be shipped to St. Louis for free distribution to the veterans. As one newspaper pointed out:

Everyone of the veterans who has a cluster of these grapes, or tastes of the other luscious fruit, will have a definite appreciation of what the charming climate of California can produce, such as no reading or advertisement of any kind could convey. The whole plan is unique, and will, under the management of Major Rust and his colleagues, add perceptibly to the boom that Southern California is already enjoying.<sup>21</sup>







*An amateur archaeologist, Rust dug up more than 200 clay vessels and many hundreds of skulls from mounds and graves in Missouri in 1876 and 1877.*

Not one to waste a promotional opportunity, Rust was on hand to greet the Grand Army veterans when they met in California. He and his committee traveled 142 miles to the railroad station at Barstow where they set up tables and welcomed the passengers with fruits, wine, and lemonade. This hospitality, he said, not only honored Union soldiers but gave them “a truthful knowledge of the advantages which our country offers them and their friends for settlement.”<sup>22</sup> Rust was quick to point out, too, that the Golden State had a place for everyone:

Do not believe that land is so high you cannot afford to come and make a home or a living; there are millions of acres in this great State where no boom has yet disturbed its quiet. Cheap lands can be found by the pioneer where the rich retiring merchant will not go, and where honest toil will be amply repaid; where nature will smile upon you, and at worst only blow a little dust in your face.<sup>23</sup>

Rust’s interests and energy engaged him in more than simple boosterism. His abilities greatly impressed Abbot Kinney, a fellow board member of the Pasadena Free Library and Village Improvement Association. In 1883, Kinney and Helen Hunt Jackson served as special United States Commissioners to investigate the plight of California’s Mission Indians. Kinney decided that Rust would be “the best possible man”<sup>24</sup> for duty as a government Indian agent, and he and Helen Hunt Jackson lobbied for Rust’s appointment. In 1889, Rust was formally named agent for the Indians of the Mission-Tule River Consolidated Agency. His jurisdiction extended from the Hoopa Valley in Northern California to the Mexican border and included twenty-two reservations, most of them near the agency headquarters at Colton in San Bernardino County.

At the time Rust was appointed agent, he was secretary of the Los Angeles branch of the Indian Rights Association. Reformers knew him as a champion of

Rogelio Rocha, one of the last of the San Fernando Mission Indians, whose fate became a cause célèbre when white landowners forcibly evicted him from his lifelong home. (After Rogelio’s death in 1904, Rust wrote an article for *Out West* which reopened the controversy about Rogelio’s treatment.) One newspaper said of Rust’s appointment, “His sympathies are with the Indians, and he proposes to see that they obtain complete justice and fair treatment.”<sup>25</sup>

Rust served four embattled years as agent. Confronting him were knotty problems of conflicting land claims, of squatters on Indian lands, and of hostile farmers and developers who wanted the reservations opened to homesteading. Antagonism arose from Indians who challenged assimilationist government policies that would force them to give up their language and traditions. Other sensitive issues included church-run schools for Indian children and whether the schools should receive government aid.

“As Agent,” Rust commented in one of his reports, “I am trying to do that which is best for the Indian, for he is here to stay and to be a citizen.”<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, he urged the government to fence reservation lands against white intruders, to settle land titles, and to provide irrigation water. He also requested money for farm equipment and for seed, recommended building a hospital and a jail, and proposed a bounty on whiskey sellers. In addition, he repaired and rebuilt schools and put them under the care of competent teachers.

Comparing his views on education for Indians to those of Booker T. Washington for the Negro, Rust urged immediate emphasis on practical training, with “the higher, the esthetic education,”<sup>27</sup> reserved for future generations. He also pressed the government to build a manual training school away from the reservation “near some thrifty settlement, where the pupils would come in constant contact with civilization rather than their home influences”<sup>28</sup> and where they might find employment.

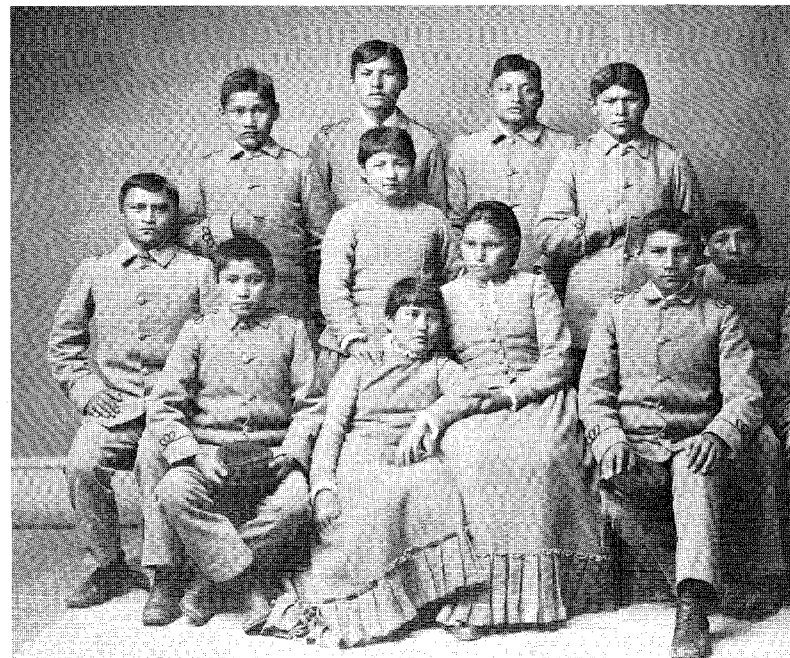
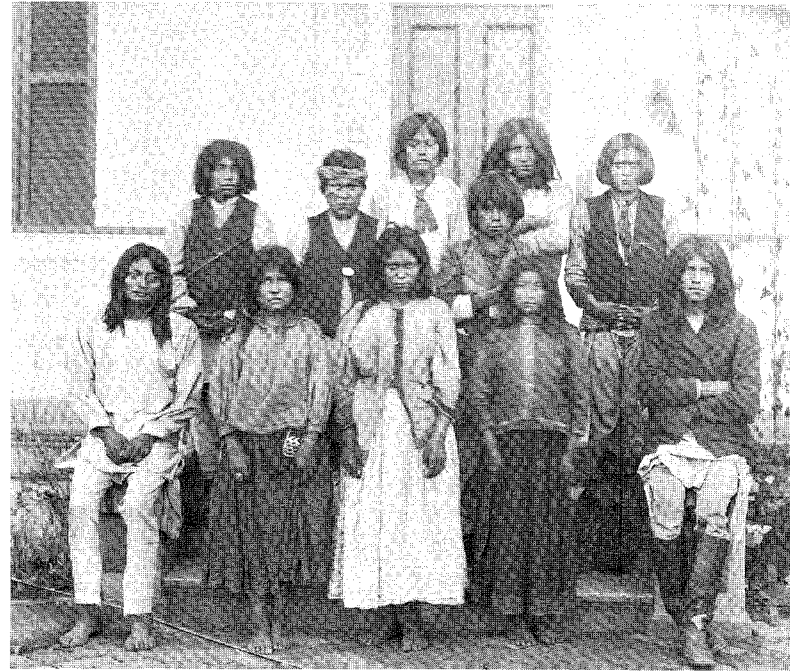
*Taken prisoner with Geronimo in 1886, these young Chiricahua Apaches were sent to the Indian school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Four months later, they were photographed again. Rust believed this picture would help counteract anti-Indian prejudice.*

Campaigning for this kind of school, he exhibited photographs of eleven Chiricahua Apache children who had been taken prisoner with Geronimo and released to the Indian Industrial School at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. According to the *Los Angeles Herald*, photographs taken soon after the capture of the children showed them with

matted hair, lowering looks and attitude of sullen indifference. . . . The companion photographs taken after the Indians had been at Carlisle four months, and had profited by the philanthropic attention of their teachers, show a magical change. . . . There can be no question whatever but that the true policy to be pursued towards the remnants of the Indian tribes of the Pacific coast should be one of kindness and development.<sup>29</sup>

Striving to interest various towns in deeding land for a school, Rust argued that a supply of Indian labor "would be a valuable consideration for local employers."<sup>30</sup> In response to his campaign, the citizens of Perris gave the government eighty acres, and a manual training school was built there in 1893. Unfortunately, the school never fulfilled Rust's expectations. He complained that the government ignored his recommendations for superintendent and that the first man to hold the position "disgraced the school, robbed the government of several thousand dollars, and ran away."<sup>31</sup> A later superintendent declared that the school was inadequate and the site inappropriate, and he lobbied for its removal to Riverside. Although then retired as agent, Rust fought to convince publishers, politicians, and the general public that the school should remain in Perris. In 1902, however, it closed and later reopened in Riverside as the Sherman Institute.

Government day schools on the reservation competed with two Catholic mission schools—one in San Diego and one in Banning—which received a government allotment for each Indian student. Rust accused the school at Banning of aggressively recruiting on the reservation and won a promise that it would not seek out or enroll students living within three miles of any gov-





ernment day school. Some Catholics charged Rust with despoiling Indians of their faith and tried to have him removed as agent. William Pablo, an influential Cahuilla and a Catholic, infuriated Rust by encouraging Indians to keep their children out of the government schools. Pablo succeeded for a time in forcing the day school at Potrero (near Banning) to close down for lack of students.

During his tenure as agent, Rust clashed repeatedly with Pablo and his kinsman Chief Cabezon, who actively opposed government efforts to break up the traditional tribal structure. Because the agent considered the two men troublemakers, he urged that they be jailed "until they would quietly submit to proper authority and stop their aspirations to be chiefs."<sup>32</sup> Rust complained of Cabezon's "pernicious and meddlesome influence"<sup>33</sup> and accused Pablo of "constantly fomenting trouble, inciting lawsuits, and hindering those who desire to work."<sup>34</sup>

The Cabezons were hereditary leaders of the Cahuillas, and Rust created an uproar when he encouraged dissident Indians to hold an election in hopes of unseating Cabezon. The dissidents' candidate won, and Rust commissioned him as chief.

Rust responded differently, however, when Indians at Potrero elected William Pablo as their captain. "As long as you elect a good man and obey him and me, you can have a captain," he warned the Indians, "but when you elect a bad man you will not have any captain."<sup>35</sup> Ignoring Pablo, he selected the leader of a rival faction for the position. The man he chose was his personal interpreter, John Morongo, whom he considered "by far the most intelligent, careful, and reasonable man in Potrero."<sup>36</sup>

By this appointment, made with the sanction of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Rust challenged the Indians' right to elect their own leaders.<sup>37</sup> Pablo fought back. He enlisted the support of a San Bernardino attorney (ironically, his name was John Brown) and

circulated a petition asking for Rust's removal. When the Bureau of Indian Affairs merely responded that the agent had good intentions, Pablo gave the newspapers a list of grievances: that Rust was tyrannical and arbitrary, had "the visionary theories and self-conceit of a crank,"<sup>38</sup> and was less interested in his duties as agent than in obtaining artifacts from the Indians and selling them for personal gain.

Pablo also organized the Indians to get Cabezon re-elected. In March, 1892, the *San Francisco Chronicle* discussed the upcoming election in an article that lampooned Rust and lauded Pablo as "a remarkably able Indian . . . who has shown great political ability in this fight."<sup>39</sup> Accusing Rust of stirring up factional discord among the Cahuillas, the *Chronicle* also charged him with using his official visits to the reservations as "predatory relic-hunting tours."<sup>40</sup> The charges were repeated in newspapers across the country, and the *Los Angeles Times* suggested that Rust's job as agent allowed him "to kill two birds with one stone pestle, so to speak."<sup>41</sup>

Immediately, Rust's friends sprang to his defense. An outraged Jessie Benton Frémont wrote Anna Dawes, whose father was chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, that Rust was "of the best New England high motive and courage. . . . Not the kind of people the usual Indian agent comes from; and therefore *very* displeasing and disturbing to the interests of the usual kind there." In conclusion, she expressed a hope that Dawes would "protect such an unusual man who combines true care of the Indians with researches that make America honored among scientific bodies here and in Europe."<sup>42</sup>

In May, 1892, Rust came under fire again in a letter to the editor of the *St. Louis Republic*, which had carried an article on the Cahuillas. A St. Louis man, who once tried to have Rust dismissed from his position for bigotry, sent copies of the letter to Senator George G. Vest of Missouri and John W. Noble, Secretary of the Interior. When the Senate requested information on the

*In 1903 Rust brought a group of Navajos to Pasadena for the Rose Parade. Later he took them to San Pedro, where they made an offering of sacred meal to the Pacific Ocean.*

discontent among the Cahuillas, Noble authorized an investigation.

The subsequent inquiry found that although Rust was a person of ability, he lacked the qualifications to be a successful agent. His manner was described as "most unfortunate, calculated unintentionally to make enemies;"<sup>43</sup> but Rust himself, the report concluded, was "honest, of good moral character and honest in his convictions . . . a man who intends to do right."<sup>44</sup> Rust was forced to resign in 1893, but he continued to speak out in behalf of schools, jobs, and land allotments for the Indians.

In 1892, while embroiled with Cabezon and Pablo, Rust had tried to get a job collecting for the museum at Stanford University. Scholars from Harvard and the University of Pennsylvania who wrote letters on his behalf described Rust as "exact and painstaking . . . an expert in his line of research"<sup>45</sup> and "an enthusiastic and able collector of archaeological and ethnological materials."<sup>46</sup>

When nothing came of these efforts, Rust turned his attention to the World's Columbian Exposition scheduled for Chicago in 1893. Although O. T. Mason of the Smithsonian Institution thought Rust "the best man on the West Coast"<sup>47</sup> to prepare an ethnological exhibit under the auspices of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Rust was not given the assignment. He did attend the fair, however, and he gloried in it. He arranged an exhibit of Lincoln and John Brown memorabilia, served as judge for ethnological exhibits, and won an award for his own collection of artifacts which Frank G. Logan, a Chicago businessman, had recently bought to present to Beloit College in Wisconsin. According to news reports, the Rust Collection was "the finest of its kind in existence and worth fully \$15,000."<sup>48</sup> It remains an important part of the school's Logan Museum of Anthropology.

In 1895, Rust collected more artifacts on a trip through the Southwest to see the Grand Canyon, the

Petrified Forest, and the Snake Dance of the Hopi Indians. Traveling with him were three fellow Pasadenaans—Mrs. Thaddeus S. C. Lowe, who possessed a magnificent collection of Indian baskets; A. C. Vroman, who made his first photographs of the Southwest on this trip; and the photographer J. C. Crandall, described by Vroman as "the man to whom I go for advice, when in trouble."<sup>49</sup> The travelers went by train, by lumber wagon, and—in Mrs. Lowe's case—by twelve-foot ladder. Too heavy to climb to the mesa where the dance was performed, she sat regally on the ladder as seven Indians carried her up the trail.

A careful observer, Rust wrote a detailed news report of the trip with descriptions of the dance, the landscape, and Navajo and Hopi customs. "We feel sure," he summarized, "that the student or tourist cannot find a more wild, unknown, and interesting country on the continent than Arizona."<sup>50</sup> Rust also wrote an article, "The Moqui Snake Dance," which appeared in *The Land of Sunshine* in January, 1896, and was illustrated by Vroman's stunning photographs.

Over the next few years, Rust busied himself with the archaeology of his own locale. He studied the sites of seven prehistoric villages in the Pasadena area and observed that they were all in areas still considered desirable, thus showing, he wrote, "that pre-historic man was a good judge of residence property."<sup>51</sup> Rust made numerous finds on San Nicolas Island and made two collecting trips for the Smithsonian. Its department of ethnology was delighted with the objects he obtained from the Mission Indians and specially noted them in its annual reports for 1900 and 1901.

A year after his wife Fidelia died in 1899, Rust married Hattie S. Elliott. Although now in his seventies, Rust apparently was considering a career as lecturer because R. J. Bennett wrote him: "Your best subjects, as I look at it, will be 'Indian' and 'Archaeology.' 'The Cañon' and 'Snake Dance' are sewed up in expensive style. . . . Now for a secret, but don't tell it—Punch and Judy will





draw a larger crowd than all you have found of pre-historic times.”<sup>52</sup>

One of the most extraordinary of Rust’s later enterprises was bringing thirty Navajos from Canyon Diablo in Arizona to Pasadena to take part in the 1903 Rose Parade. After visiting hogans for thirty miles along the Little Colorado River, he invited the Indians to a Christmas feast at the railroad depot. In his own words: “It consisted of Mutton, Flour, Coffee & Sugar and Baking Powder. These articles we issued to them each morning as they wanted it and they cooked it as they wished. Everything being free and they having no dispeptics and good appetites, all enjoyed it.”<sup>53</sup>

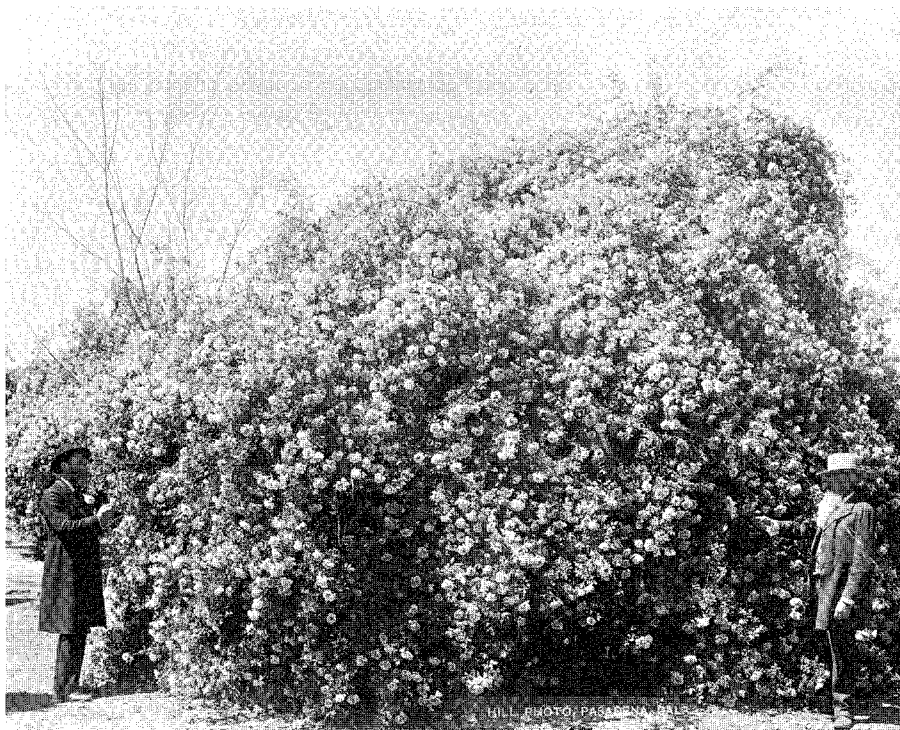
Three days later, an interpreter introduced Rust as a big chief from California who might be persuaded to take the Indians back with him for a visit. According to Rust, “In due time I consented to take such as had good Blankets saddles & such articles as I wanted. Thus they were led to display what they had & finally we had them all stand in line with their goods and we selected 27,

rejecting such as had nothing.”<sup>54</sup> The number grew to thirty when three more men sneaked aboard the railroad car.

In Pasadena the Indians camped out in Tournament Park, where they could be visited before the polo game. During the parade, the women rode on floats decorated with blankets and other Indian goods. They sat carding and spinning wool and weaving blankets, while the men rode alongside on Indian ponies hired for the occasion.

For the Indians, the highlight of their Southern California trip was a visit to San Pedro where they saw the ocean for the first time. As their chief scattered sacred meal on the waves and prayed for rain, two others came forward and chanted until the water was almost at their knees. Everyone then scattered offerings and collected sand to take home. Rust provided a demijohn for the medicine men to fill with sea water, and he sent out for empty beer bottles so the others could take back sea water, too.





*Rust posed by the Gold of Ophir rosebush he planted from a cutting in 1884. Over 15 feet tall and 25 feet in diameter, the bush reportedly produced 16,563 full-blown roses in 1902.*

Before returning to Arizona, the Indians visited Vroman and Charles Lummis and accompanied Rust to church. "Wherever they went," Rust observed, "they were perfectly decorous in all things and really conducted themselves more properly than the same number of American tourists would."<sup>55</sup> The experience, he was sure, was educational for Indians and Pasadenans alike "and must have an influence for good."<sup>56</sup>

Although Rust urged education and employment for the Indians and exposure to the white man's ways, he increasingly focused on the idea of garden schools which would fit the Indians "for useful employment among the country people."<sup>57</sup> He even went so far as to declare that "larger schools teaching them music and baseball tend to destroy love of home life and their own simple ways and unfit them for anything they can do which will give them a living."<sup>58</sup> The Commissioner of Indian Affairs apparently concurred in these views, for he congratulated Rust on his common sense and knowledge of Indian nature.

In 1905 the American Anthropological Association met in California for the first time. With characteristic energy, Rust took it upon himself to publicize the meeting, and he won praise from A. L. Kroeber as a first-rate press agent. The *American Anthropologist* pub-

lished two talks Rust gave at the meeting, and the October-November, 1906, issue carried his last scientific notes. They concerned stone artifacts, a topic he had studied since boyhood. The same issue of the journal reported that Rust died on November 14, 1906, at the age of seventy-eight.

Horatio Nelson Rust was a man of wide interests, lively enthusiasms, and sturdy convictions. He tirelessly promoted Southern California and worked for the civic betterment of Pasadena, which he considered "the best *new* settlement upon the continent."<sup>59</sup> Although untrained as a scholar, he assembled a number of important archaeological collections which helped later generations understand and appreciate Native American culture. Often insensitive and at times limited in his views, he nevertheless did what he thought best to win freedom for the slaves, to improve the freedmen's lot, and to secure justice for the Indians. As Oliver Wendell Holmes told Rust, "Doing good service to humanity . . . is your instinct and your calling."<sup>60</sup>

The photograph of the rosebush is courtesy the South Pasadena Public Library. All the other illustrations are from the Huntington Library, San Marino.



## Notes

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# “no longer a buoyant ship”

UNEARTHING THE  
GOLD RUSH STORESHIP  
*Niantic*

Transforming the sleepy settlement of Yerba Buena into the bustling city of San Francisco, the California gold rush brought thousands of eager gold seekers to the continent's western shore in ships of all sizes, makes, and registries. Many of the vessels were destined never to leave San Francisco, for more often than not their captains would wake the morning after entering the harbor to find themselves in command of ships without crews. By early 1850, over seven hundred ships lay abandoned and derelict in the waters of Yerba Buena Cove, their men lost to the lure of the gold fields.

As time passed, most of the ships were remanned or allowed to sink, but a few met an entirely different fate. Hauled near shore to be used as buildings in lumber-starved San Francisco, they served as warehouses, churches, offices, hotels, and even a prison.

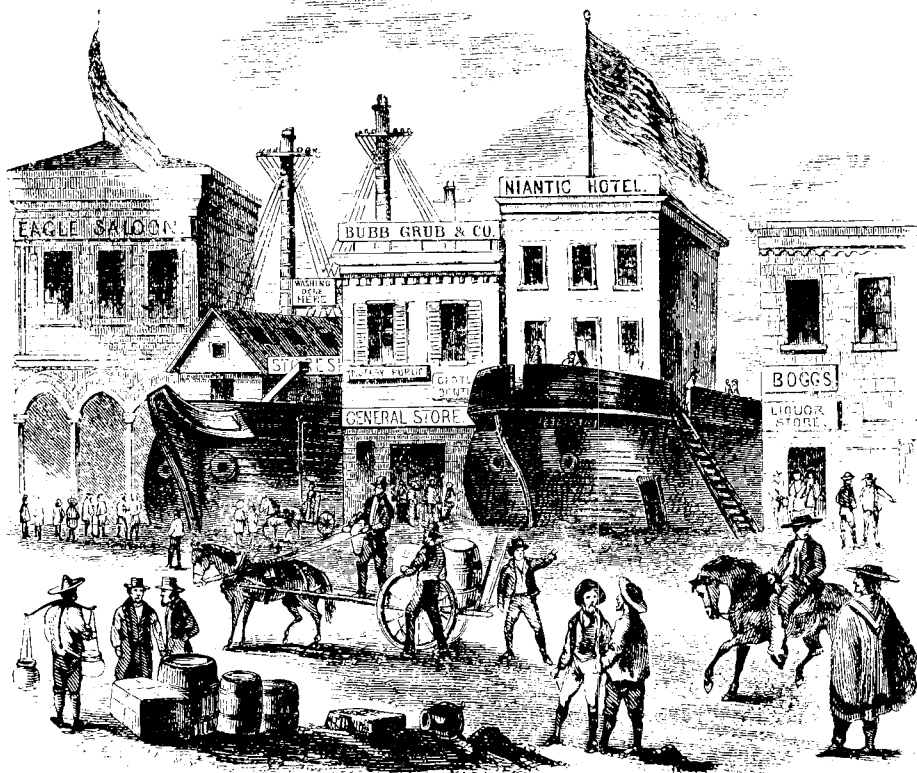
As the rapidly expanding city filled in its encircling marshes and coves, these old ships were buried where they had been anchored. Today, Yerba Buena Cove is in the heart of downtown San Francisco's financial district. Recalling the former cove and its odd assortment of forgotten vessels, some oldtimers claim that if you press your ear to the ground you can still hear the creaking of the buried ship's timbers. As if to add credibility to these tales, construction activities have occasionally unearthed the rotted and worn timbers of forgotten gold rush ships, as unidentifiable as flotsam on the beach but intriguing and mysterious.

Great was the excitement, then, when in April, 1978, excavation for a new building on Clay and Sansome streets in the city's financial district uncovered the reasonably intact remains of the old whaler *Niantic*. Unlike her fragmentary neighbors, the *Niantic* had a story to tell. Buried under twenty-four feet of mud and

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Employed by the National Park Service as an historian, James P. Delgado specializes in California history prior to 1850. He was a member of a National Park Service team assigned to evaluate the *Niantic*'s historical significance.





HIGH AND DRY.

*Frank Marryat's fanciful drawing of the storeship Niantic hints at San Francisco's bustling make-do atmosphere in the early fifties. Beached two doors away, the Apollo doubled as a saloon until everything on the former mud flats were leveled by the fire of May 3, 1851.*

fill, the *Niantic* lay where she had been beached some 130 years earlier. Even more fascinating was the discovery of many of the goods that had been stored in her hull. Fire had swept away her topsides and buried the rest of her, and modern San Franciscans were afforded a new and rare glimpse of the instant city built on foundations of gold.

News of the discovery of the *Niantic* flashed across the United States, and in San Francisco, details of the story filled the newspapers. Hundreds of people visited the site in hopes of a glimpse of the long-lost whaler, and gradually, her story emerged.

A full-rigged, three-masted sailing vessel, the *Niantic* was constructed of sturdy oak and pine in Chatham, Connecticut. Registered on October 29, 1835, at 451 tons and 119 feet long, she was extremely broad for her short length.<sup>1</sup> As a commercial vessel built for the China trade, she was a slow, "bluff-bowed" type of ship, with a massive, two-foot-thick keel held together by solid copper bars wider than a man's thumb. Her planking was attached to the ribs with huge wooden pegs, and iron spikes and brass nails held sheets of copper tight to her hull to protect against damage by marine worms. Built for one of the top shipping firms of the day,

N. L. & G. Griswold of New York, she was spared no expense in her construction.

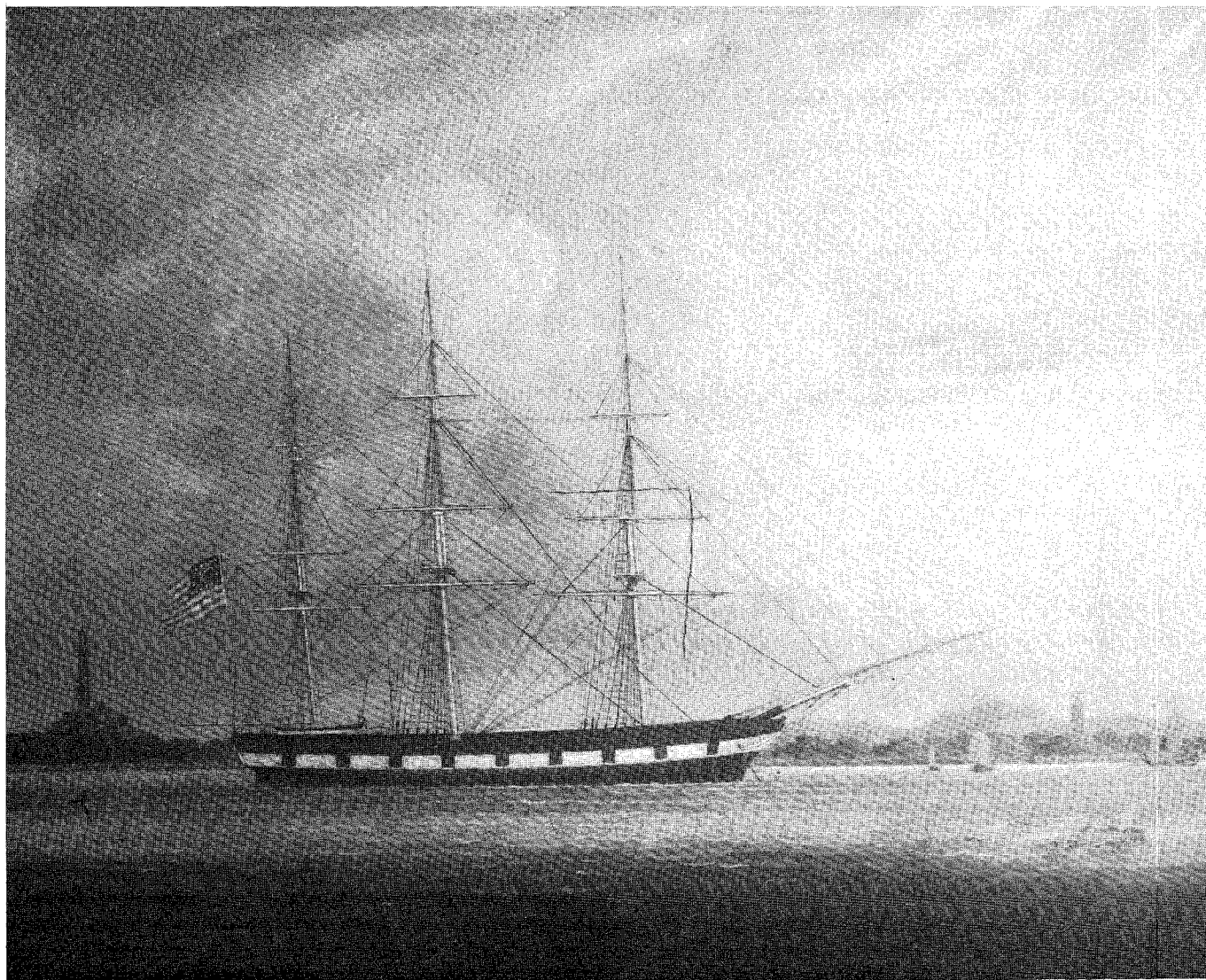
Working in the China trade, the *Niantic* was reported by her chief historian, F. C. Matthews, to be loaded with tea and silk in the Port of Canton just before it was blockaded in 1840 during the Opium War. Then, according to Matthews,

Captain [Levi F.] Doty, who was in command, was very ill when the ship was about to sail. With him, however, was Captain Robert Bennett Forbes of Boston. Captain Forbes was a partner in the firm of Russell and Company, an American firm located in Whampoa; and as he was very anxious to get home on business, he navigated the entire passage with Captain Doty making the trip laying in the cot swinging over the table in the small cabin. The trip was tedious and hard, the ship being forty-four days from Macao to Anjer, and the whole run being something over one hundred and fifty days.<sup>2</sup>

On that voyage Captain Forbes described the *Niantic* as being "rather shaky, not a fast sailer, quite crank, not over well found. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Nothing is known of the *Niantic* after the ship's arrival in New York in December 1840, until 1844, when she was sold to a Mr. C. T. Deering for use as a whaling ship. On June 4, 1844, under the command of





a Captain Slate, the *Niantic* embarked on her first whaling voyage while enroute to her new port of Sag Harbor, Maine. She was apparently out to sea until February 1, 1847, when she arrived in Sag Harbor with 120 barrels of sperm oil, 2400 barrels of whale oil, and 10,000 pounds of bone.<sup>4</sup> The *Niantic* was then sold again, this time to the firm of Burr and Smith of Warren, Rhode Island. Ironically, the *Niantic* had been named for a tribe of Indians in Rhode Island.<sup>5</sup>

The *Niantic* was next placed under the command of Captain Henry Cleaveland of West Tisbury, Massachusetts. An experienced seaman, Cleaveland was a taciturn salt who had raised three sea-going sons. All four Cleavelands were aboard the *Niantic* when she set sail for the Northwest Pacific whaling grounds on September 16, 1846.<sup>6</sup> The eldest son, James, was first mate,

with brothers Sylvanus and Daniel as second and third mates.

Journeying around Cape Horn, the *Niantic* beat her way to Payte, Peru, where she put in for provisions. Awaiting Captain Cleaveland was news of the California gold discovery. A letter from the American consul in Panama informed him that thousands of gold seekers were stranded in Panama awaiting a California-bound ship.

Cleaveland immediately landed his whaling gear and began making provisions for carrying passengers. He purchased some 2000 feet of lumber for building berths below decks and took on foodstuffs and blankets, as well as 150 mules requested by the British consul in Panama. Finally setting sail, the *Niantic* arrived in Panama on April 7, 1849.<sup>7</sup>





Not surprisingly, chaos and pandemonium ruled in Panama City. Thousands of men had paid for passage to Panama, then hiked over the dangerous, swampy isthmus to await a ship bound for San Francisco. Being one of the first ships to arrive, the *Niantic* was warmly received. Turning down offers of exorbitant rates, Cleaveland accepted 249 passengers at \$150 for steerage and \$250 for a cabin on a first-come, first-served basis. When his ship was full, he made preparations to sail, but not before he shrewdly sold his excess provisions at a profit to the masters of ships just entering the harbor.<sup>8</sup> On May 2, 1849, the *Niantic* sailed north from Panama for California.<sup>9</sup>

The *Niantic*'s passengers were eager and impatient fortune-seekers. Some would strike it rich, others would die poor, many would sink into obscurity, and a few

A full-rigged, three-masted sailing vessel, the *Niantic* was built as a commercial ship for the China trade. The oil painting (c.1840) shows her anchored in a Chinese port, and the title page of the log from her 1848-49 voyage to California shows her receiving eager passengers at Panama. First Mate James Cleaveland may have sketched the scene.

would become prominent Californians. Aboard were a future judge and a future farmer, a future merchant and a future craftsman, as well as four slaves and their masters and a minister intent on bringing the gospel into the mines.<sup>10</sup>

After a voyage of some sixty-six days, the *Niantic* entered San Francisco Bay on July 5, 1849, with her 248 passengers (one man died during the passage). While the gold seekers soon dispersed into California's mining region, the *Niantic* remained in San Francisco. She had another role to play in the town's history.

As soon as the *Niantic* anchored off Clark's Point (near Telegraph Hill) in Yerba Buena Cove, small boats ferried the passengers to the mainland for the inflated price of \$20 per person. On shore, the excitement and enthusiasm of the gold seekers was so contagious that within one week, the *Niantic*, like hundreds of other vessels in Yerba Buena Cove, had been abandoned by her crew.

Lying deserted and at anchor, the *Niantic* became an insurance risk for her owners. Instead of scuttling her, owners Burr and Smith offered the *Niantic* for sale in the summer of 1849. Their advertisement in the August 9, 1849, *Alta California* read in part:

SHIP *NIANTIC* AND OUTFIT FOR SALE.—  
The subscribers offer for sale, the ship "*Niantic*," 452 tons register, with a full inventory; she is a fast sailer, and ready for any voyage; she will be sold a bargain if applied for immediately, together with a large quantity of merchandise suitable for this market. The ship and outfit can be bought separately.

COOKE, BAKER & Co.  
Sacramento St.

Because San Francisco was growing so quickly and because frequent fires repeatedly levelled the town, lumber and other building supplies were in great demand. One way to meet the demand for shelters was to beach or permanently moor a ship for use as a building, and it was for this purpose that Adolphe Mailliard and

Sam Ward, San Francisco real estate speculators, purchased the *Niantic*.

Waiting until high tide, Mailliard and Ward drove the *Niantic* toward shore and beached her at the end of Clay Street, which extended to the water. According to one account, Mailliard accomplished this task by the following ingenious method:

Short cables were passed under her keel and attached at each end to huge casks that had been partially filled with water and placed along her sides. Then the water was siphoned from the casks. Thus lightened and acting as buoys, they raised the hull several feet, and her owners were able to float her well up on the beach. The casks were then removed. . . .<sup>11</sup>

Once beached, the *Niantic*'s masts were taken out, her rigging and some of her ballast were removed, and piles were driven into each side to keep her erect. In her new career she would be a storehouse, if not quite a storeship.<sup>12</sup>

On September 9, 1849, the *Alta California* announced that the *Niantic* was ready to accept articles for storage. Interested parties were to "apply on board to Ward, Mersch and Company." By one account, the *Niantic*'s hull had been pierced with two doors, one on Clay Street, "above which her enterprising owner had painted the ingratiating sign: 'Rest For The Weary and Storage for Trunks.'"<sup>13</sup>

Some months later another advertisement for the *Niantic*'s services appeared in the *Alta*. According to the notice of February 2, 1850:

The owners of the ship *Niantic* announce to the public of San Francisco, that said vessel is now ready to receive storage upon the most favorable terms. From the facilities offered of receiving and delivering goods, both afloat and on shore, with security against rain and fire, they confidently recommend these warehouses to the attention of the mercantile community. Terms of storage—\$1 per month per barrel of 196 lbs., or thereabouts; \$10 per month per ton of 40 cubic feet. Goods are received or delivered from 8 A.M. to 5 P.M. Two large lighters of about 50 tons, to let. Apply on board to Whitehead, Ward, & Co.

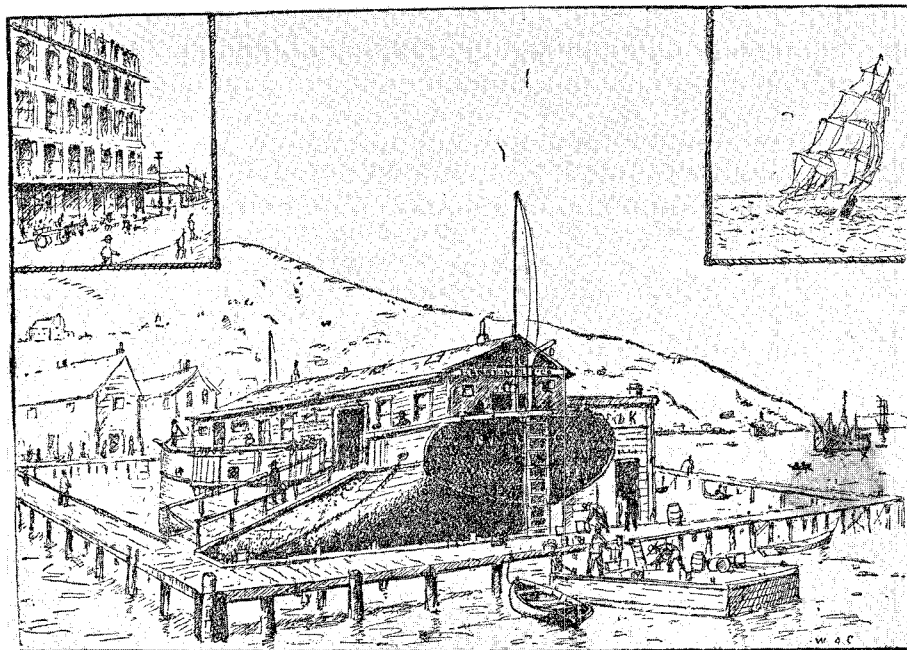
The "lighters" mentioned in the advertisement were small craft used to load and unload freight from the *Niantic* which was still surrounded on three sides by water. To improve the access by lighters to his ship, Mailliard in fact purchased all of the water lots between the *Niantic* and Montgomery Street to the east. When he informed his new tenants of his purchase, however, they questioned that "those Yankees" would leave the lots "that way." The rapid filling-in of the water lots proved them right.<sup>14</sup>

Soon the *Niantic* became San Francisco's best-known storeship, and many travelers and residents made mention of her. Perhaps even Captain Cleaveland, who stayed with his sons in San Francisco to take advantage of the booming market, may have stored his wares in his old command.<sup>15</sup>

Contemporary accounts of the *Niantic* give a complete description of this important San Francisco storeship. One narrative by William Kelley, who visited the *Niantic* in March of 1850, described her new-found use:

On inquiring where my friend, Mr. S., was located, I was told that I could be landed at a stair-foot leading right to it; and was not a little surprised when we pulled alongside a huge dismantled hulk, surrounded by a strong and spacious stage, connected with the street by a substantial wharf, to find the counting house on the deck of the *Niantic*, a fine vessel of a thousand tons, no longer a buoyant ship, surmounted by lofty spars and streamers waving in the wind, but a tenement anchored in the mud, covered with a shingle roof, subdivided into stores and offices and painted over with signs and showboards of the various occupants. To this base use was my friend obliged to convert her rather than let her rot at anchor, there being no possibility of getting a crew to send her to sea. Her hull was divided into warehouses, entered by spacious doorways on the sides, and her bulwarks were raised about eight feet, affording a





THE NIAN TIC - WHALESHIP, STOREHOUSE, BUSINESS BLOCK.

[Sketched for the "Call" by W. A. Coulter.]

More accurate than Marryat's rendering, this sketch of the storeship *Niantic* shows her busy rear access by water.

range of excellent offices on the deck, at the level of which a wide balcony was carried around, surmounted by a veranda, approached by a broad, handsome stairway. Both stores and offices found tenants at higher rates than tenements of similar dimensions on shore would, and returned a larger and steadier income, as my friend told me, than the ship would have earned if afloat.<sup>16</sup>

Another San Francisco resident and former *Niantic* passenger observed that "moored for storage, [the ship] earned her owners \$20,000 per month for a long, long, time."<sup>17</sup>

Called by the San Francisco Maritime Museum "the most famous vessel of gold rush San Francisco," the *Niantic*—both at sea and on land and in words and in pictures—is probably "the most documented storeship" in San Francisco.<sup>18</sup> One of the most delightful contemporary drawings of her use as a storeship was rendered for the book *Mountains and Molehills* by author and artist Frank Marryat. Drawn with great artistic license, the picture was later rendered into a lithograph. At the time Marryat made his drawing, Yerba Buena Cove was already partially filled, and the *Niantic* rested about three blocks from the sea. Titling his drawing "High and Dry," the amused Marryat explained:

The front of the city is extending rapidly into the sea, as water-lots are filled up with sand hills which the steam excavators remove. This has left many of the old ships,

which were a year ago beached as store-houses, in a curious position; for the filled-up space that surrounds them has been built upon for some distance, and new streets run between them and the sea, so that a stranger puzzles himself for some time to ascertain how the *Apollo* and *Niantic* became perched in the middle of the street. . . .<sup>19</sup>

Because San Francisco was built mainly of wood and canvas, frequent fires swept the town. Four conflagrations between 1849 and 1851 completely levelled the new city, the greatest of them all being the fire of May 4, 1851, which destroyed some 2000 buildings, including the *Niantic*, within several hours.

The wind that would have been considered high, though no fire had existed, was now raised to a hurricane by the actions of the flames that greedily sucked in the fresh air. The hollows under the planked streets were like great blowpipes, that stirred the fire to fearful activity. Through such strange channels, too . . . as dry and inflammable as tinder, the flames were communicated from street to street, and in an amazingly short time the whole surface, over an entire region, glowed, crackled and blazed, one immense fiery field. The reflection from the sky . . . was said to have been visible at Monterey, nearly a hundred miles off!<sup>20</sup>

The same account observed that even "fireproof" brick buildings were not safe: "Solid walls, supposedly fire-proof, crumbled in pieces. . . . Thick iron shutters and doors grew red hot and warped and . . . insured final destruction to everything within them."<sup>21</sup> (People were

literally baked alive when iron shutters and doors expanded with the heat and trapped the occupants inside.)

When the fire finally burned itself out by consuming all the available fuel, gone was the *Niantic*, whose topsides and hull were very early casualties. Only the lower portion of her hull remained, buried in the wet mud and sand that had buttressed her. Because her owners believed that she had been completely destroyed, they made no effort to salvage her hull or her stored merchandise. Unlucky businessmen like storekeepers Van Brunt and Verplanck, among others, lost almost forty cases of champagne which had been stored in her hold. Before the fire's ashes had cooled, however, new building was underway, and soon the site of the old *Niantic* was covered.

Erected over the *Niantic's* remains was a three-story wood building whose ground floor housed commercial offices and stores while the second and third stories hosted "the up-to-date and comfortable accommodations of L. H. Robie's *Niantic* Hotel."<sup>22</sup>

Within five months of the great fire of May 3, 1851, the *Niantic* Hotel opened its doors, and on October 4, 1851, the San Francisco *Daily Herald* reported that:

The undersigned would respectfully announce that his new and commodious Hotel, situated at the corner of Clay and Sansome Streets, is now open for the reception of company. The house is located upon the site of the old ship *Niantic*, in the very heart of the city, and whether for the man of business or pleasure, the location is not excelled by any other in town. The parlors are spacious and tastefully furnished, while the sleeping rooms are airy, neat and pleasant. . . . The larder will be amply supplied with every substantial and luxury which the market affords, and the choicest wines and liquors will always be found at the bar. In short, the undersigned pledges himself that nothing will be wanting to render the *Niantic* Hotel an agreeable resort for either the traveler of business or pleasure.

L. H. Robie, Proprietor.

For the next twenty years, the *Niantic* Hotel opened its rooms to patrons, but with each of its four owners,

the standards of the hotel seemed to decline. The "unsavory proximity" of the Barbary Coast a few blocks away may have enhanced the problem.<sup>23</sup> The last years of the *Niantic* Hotel were ones of shady characters and of criminal activities, and in 1872, the building was demolished to make way for the construction of a new commercial building.

During the construction excited workmen unearthed the remains of the *Niantic* while excavating for the cellar. As reported in the *Alta*,

The old *Niantic* Hotel is a thing of the past—it has been torn down and carted off piecemeal. Yesterday the floors were "turned up" much to the gratification of the Micawber Convention, which has been in daily session at the corner of Clay and Sansome Streets since the work of the demolition commenced. The principal object of interest is the hull of the old ship *Niantic*, which formed the foundation of the building, and a portion of which is now clearly visible. The old hulk has lain there for over twenty-two years, and many San Franciscans distinctly remember the time when she was used as a storeship until the fire of May, 1851, which left nothing but the charred hulk of the old vessel. . . .<sup>24</sup>

Former San Francisco saloon owners T. A. Barry and B. A. Patten, however, recalled that the *Niantic* Hotel demolition uncovered more than just the ship's timbers:

The old hull at the time of the fire was imbedded in the mud some eight feet or below the waterline. At this line, after the conflagration, the debris was cleared away and the floor timbers of the hotel laid, covering and keeping safe from public knowledge stowed away in the remnant of the old hull, thirty-five baskets of champagne and many other artifacts in storage. Twenty-one years in storage! We have not learned whether any bill for this has been sent to Mr. Van Brunt; but the wine was placed in storage by that gentleman and his partner at that time—Mr. Verplanck. Their store was on Sansome Street, adjoining the *Niantic*. The wine was the Jacquesson Fils brand—a superior wine, very popular in California, where dry wines are always preferred. This long buried wine was found—or rather the bottles were found—in most remarkable preservation; the wires, and even the twine, being in better condition than many ships just off the voyage from France. Champagne





*Erected over the Niantic's remains in 1851 was a three-story office and hotel building. Once a respectable lodging place, it declined in stature and hosted criminal activities. Demolition of the building appears to be in progress in this photograph c.1872.*

deteriorates after the third year; but this wine had been so completely covered as to be almost excluded from the air, and some of the wine effervesced slightly on uncorking, and was of very fair flavor.<sup>25</sup>

Shortly after the discovery, Mr. C. Low began construction of a four-story brick commercial building on the site. Unbeknownst to the builder, however, he had only touched upon the *Niantic's* remains, and the new floor covered the ship once again.

Keeping with tradition, Low named his new building the Niantic Block. It stood at the corner of Clay and Sansome streets until 1906, when the earthquake and fire of April 18 demolished it. Before the ashes cooled, San Francisco once again began to rebuild, and just as the *Niantic* Hotel had risen from the ashes of the *Niantic*, a new building was scheduled to grow from the ashes of the Niantic Block.

Designed as a four-story structure of reinforced concrete, the new office was the work of Lorenzo Scatena, a prominent produce merchant and stepfather of A. P. Giannini, the founder of the Bank of Italy (today's Bank of America). In keeping with tradition, the building was named the Niantic Building. As construction began on the structure, workmen dredged up more remains of the old *Niantic*. At the time of this second unearthing, bystanders removed timbers from the stern area of the ship, including planking from the interior of the hull. Also taken away were some of the ship's "spoons and copper."<sup>26</sup> To facilitate the pouring of the new founda-

tion, workmen then removed part of the keelson at the stern. This led many to believe that the ship had been totally unearthed or destroyed, and the newspapers said as much.

Also retrieved at this time was more champagne. Years later, one longtime San Francisco resident recalled that her father had been given a bottle which was "put away, to be used on some special family occasion, which was many years later, on a wedding anniversary. The cork of the bottle was drawn with much ceremony, but on the first sip there was a great splattering by the anticipating partakers—the bottle had been submerged so long that the salt water had forced through the cork."<sup>27</sup> A newspaper writer later surmised that more of the wine had been hidden away in the exclusive wine cellar of a San Francisco millionaire who no doubt also received a similar surprise.<sup>28</sup>

Believing in 1919 that the ship had been destroyed, the Native Sons of the Golden West erected a bronze plaque on the new building. The false obituary read:

The emigrant ship *Niantic* stood on this spot in the early days when the water came up to Montgomery Street. Converted to other uses, it was covered with a shingle roof with offices and stores on the deck, at the level of which was constructed a wide balcony surmounted by a veranda. The hull was divided into warehouses, entered by doorways on the sides.

The fire of May 3, 1851, destroyed all but the submerged hulk which was later utilized as the foundation for the Niantic Hotel, a famous hostelry which stood until 1872.<sup>29</sup>

*When workmen excavated the site at Sansome and Clay streets, they struck the remains of the original Niantic. Only the stern section could be uncovered; the bow presumably extends to the west under Transamerica Building's Redwood Park (visible at top of photograph). The ship's stern appears pointed because the ship burned down to the bottom of the hull where it narrows to the single stern post. Photograph by Ann Howard.*

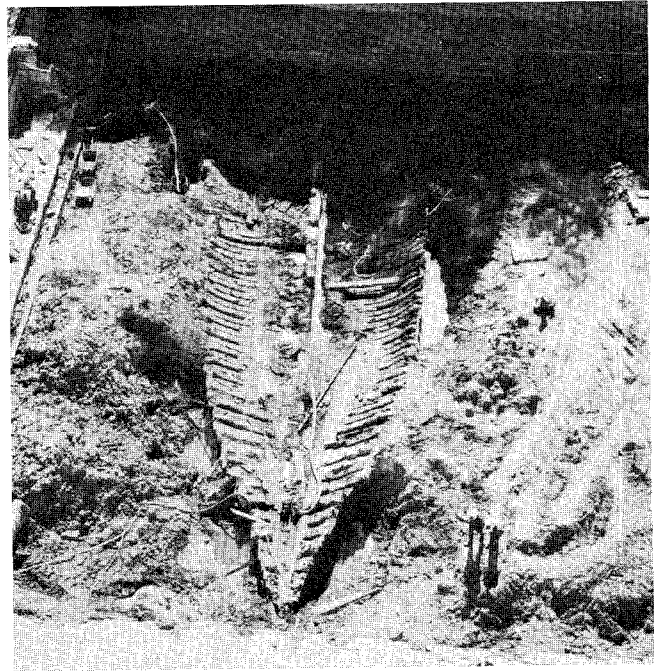
The *Niantic* lay at peace until early 1976, when developers announced plans to demolish the old Niantic Building and build a modern highrise on the site. An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared by a private consultant for the San Francisco Department of City Planning identified the site as being the historic location of the *Niantic*. Although information indicated that the ship's remains had been removed in 1907, the possibility of uncovering artifacts was not ruled out, and the EIR noted that "many artifacts from the previous site use were uncovered (e.g. timbers, glassware, even full bottles of wine)" at the time the Niantic Building was built. Cautiously, the EIR stipulated that the San Francisco Maritime Museum should be notified if any artifacts were found.

In early 1978, workmen began excavation for foundations for the new building. On April 28, they struck what appeared to be the bottom of a ship. In accordance with the EIR, the site's owner and developer, J. Patrick Mahoney, contacted the San Francisco Maritime Museum about the discovery.<sup>30</sup>

Before museum personnel arrived, workmen had already cleared away part of the hull. The stern section was exposed, with the bow extending into the side-wall of the excavation and onto another piece of adjacent property. Maritime Museum Curator Harlan Soeten quickly ascertained that more remains of the *Niantic* had been found.<sup>31</sup>

In order for the building construction to continue, the ship had to be removed from the site. After determining that the cost of simply removing the ship would exceed \$630,000, the museum gamely began a campaign to raise the sum.<sup>32</sup>

In the interim, Maritime Museum personnel hurriedly salvaged accessible artifacts. The section near the *Niantic*'s bow had not been disturbed during the previous construction work, and resting in the mud were the artifacts that had been placed in the hull during the gold rush: tools, floor coverings, guns, writing utensils,



foodstuffs, and even some cases of champagne.<sup>33</sup> Most of the artifacts were taken to the Maritime Museum, but fragile items were put in cold storage.

Although the Maritime Museum could not obtain funds to preserve the ship's remains, the developer agreed to remove parts of the ship intact at his own expense. Before this removal on May 11, the National Trust for Historic Preservation funded a photogrammetric study of the ship from which to compile detailed measured drawings of the ship's remains.<sup>34</sup>

With drills and jackhammers, workmen detached and then removed an eight-foot cross-section of the hull from the ship. The rest of the hull was bulldozed, and other structural timbers were removed for storage, along with the intact section of the stern and the ship's rudder, the ship's windlass (which was used to raise the anchor), and over two tons of assorted hull pieces. An inventory of the museum's collections, including the *Niantic* artifacts, was completed by the National Park



Service in the summer of 1978, when the San Francisco Maritime Museum became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area of the National Park system.<sup>35</sup>

Although the remains of the *Niantic* were subsequently denied eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places, plans to preserve and display her remains and her artifacts are being made. In the future, visitors to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area will be afforded a unique view of gold rush San Francisco through the preserved remains of the storeship *Niantic* as she was found in the mud of Yerba Buena Cove.

Frank Marryat's drawing is from *Mountains and Molehills* (London, 1855). The painting of the *Niantic* is courtesy Dionis Coffin Riggs, and the log page is courtesy Mrs. Alan Look, both of West Tisbury, Massachusetts. The sketch of the ship is from the *San Francisco Call*, March 17, 1895. All the reproductions, except the excavation view loaned by the National Park Service, are courtesy the National Maritime Museum of San Francisco.

## Notes

1. Forrest R. Holdcamper, *List of American-Flag Merchant Vessels that Received Certificates of Enrollment or Registry at the Port of New York 1789-1867* (Washington, D.C.: National Archives, 1968).
2. F. S. Matthews, "The Earliest Days of the Ship *Niantic*," *Society of California Pioneers Quarterly*, 6 (October, 1929): 135.
3. Robert Bennett Forbes, *Personal Reminiscences* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1892), p. 157.
4. Matthews, "*Niantic*," p. 135.
5. Robert O'Brien, "The Story of the *Niantic*," April 13, 1949, from a series of articles clipped from an unidentified newspaper, on file at the California Historical Society Library.
6. F. C. Matthews Papers, on file at the San Francisco History Room, San Francisco Public Library, Civic Center.
7. "Log of the Ship *Niantic*," entry for April 7, 1849, from a xerox copy in the San Francisco Maritime Museum.
8. Emma Mayhew Whiting and Henry Hough Beetle, *Whaling Wives* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1953), p. 20.
9. "Log *Niantic*," entry for May 2, 1849; Whiting and Beetle, *Whaling Wives*, p. 20.
10. Several *Niantic* passengers left accounts of their historic voyage. John S. McCollum published his tale in a book entitled *California As I Saw It*; John M. Cushing published his recollections seventy years later. One passenger, known only as "R.J.C.," composed a letter which was published in the *San Francisco Call* of March 26, 1893. Captain Cleaveland also left memoirs of the voyage, and the *Niantic*'s logbook remains in the hands of a Cleaveland family descendant. Dale S. Morgan, ed. *California As I Saw It, By John S. McCollum* (Los Gatos: Talisman Press, 1960); John Morland Cushing, "From New York to San Francisco . . .," *Society of California Pioneers Quarterly*, October, 1929, 119-134; Dionis Coffin Riggs, *From Off Island* (New York: McGraw-Hill Books, 1940), p. 329.
11. O'Brien, "The Story of the *Niantic*," July 27, 1949.
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15. Whiting and Beetle, *Whaling Wives*, p. 21.
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31. Ibid.
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33. Isabel Bullen, "Preliminary Report of an Excavation on the Gold Rush Ship *Niantic*," "San Francisco Maritime Museum, May, 1978.
34. *Fresno Bee*, June 2, 1978. Professor Kendish Jeyapalan of California State University, Fresno, compiled this study.
35. James P. Delgado and Gordon S. Chappell, "National Register Nomination for the Artifacts and Remains of the Gold Rush Ship *Niantic*" (San Francisco: National Park Service, Western Regional Office, Office of the Regional Historian), June, 1978.

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# *a glimpse into the Niantic's hold*

*The hull of the ship Niantic, a buried gold rush relic that had been rediscovered in 1872 and 1907, made its latest appearance in San Francisco in 1978 when construction began on a new office building on the northwest corner of Clay and Sansome streets. Beached in 1849, the Niantic had been uncovered during construction work in 1872 and 1907. A newspaper account of the 1907 discovery suggested that the remains of the hull had been fully removed.*

*In May of 1978, the hull was uncovered yet again. Accordingly, the building contractor who was excavating the area informed the San Francisco Maritime Museum (then a privately-funded non-profit organization, now the National Park Service's National Maritime Museum at San Francisco). Receiving news of the discovery on May 3, museum staff members were allowed on the site to examine the vessel, as construction work continued at a slower pace. On Thursday, May 4, the museum was granted permission to excavate the site after the contractor's crew had finished its day's work. Uncertain that it would be allowed more than one evening to work, the museum staff began a "rapid rescue dig" rather than abandon the discovery to the bulldozers. While the artifacts discovered are still being studied, this report on the excavation and the objects can now be offered.*

Construction crews discovered the remains of the *Niantic* along the entire south side of the eighty-five-foot construction site at Clay and Sansome. Resting parallel to Clay Street, she lay with her stern at Sansome Street and her bow apparently under the Transamerica Building's Redwood Park to the west of the site. Her hull sat about twenty feet below the current street level in wet bay mud.

All that remained of the vessel was the bottom of her hull—keel, frames (ribs), bottom planking with copper

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Isabel Bullen, formerly an archaeologist with Colonial Williamsburg, is the Photograph Archivist at the National Maritime Museum at San Francisco.



Among the artifacts in the *Niantic's* hull were (top row) a bayonet, padlock, clipboard top (?), blue and white earthenware fragment; (second row) metal label, duck's head paper holder; (third row) pistol, champagne bottle, candlestick holder, spike; and (fourth row) bottle seal and axhead (objects not all reproduced to same scale).



sheathing, partial ceiling (inner planking), and part of her keelson. On each side, the ribs extended about two feet above the keel. These remaining parts of the hull were presumably protected by mud when the *Niantic* burned on May 4, 1851.

When the museum staff began its work on May 4, exactly 127 years after the *Niantic's* destruction, the contractor's workmen had cleared almost all the mud

and sand deposits above and in the hull except for a small area at the west end of the site. Here the remaining two feet of fill over the floor of the vessel reached to the top of the ribs. This fill extended about eighteen feet from the west end of the site.

The earlier discoveries of the *Niantic's* hull had been made during construction of buildings on the lot at the corner of Clay and Sansome streets. The 1978 construc-

tion site, however, covered a larger area, and it appeared that the fill at the west end of the new site had lain under a different building. Members of the museum staff who saw the site on May 3 observed concrete paving lying over the vessel's remains and the burned debris; this may have been the floor of a building which was laid directly over the *Niantic* after the fire of May 4, 1851. This paving was removed by the evening of May 4, when the staff gained full access to the site.

Because the area at the west of the site would contain the vessel's only possible undisturbed fill, the museum staff concentrated its efforts there. A plot fifteen-by-twenty-five feet centered around the keel was marked off for exploration, with an unexcavated four-foot-wide strip to the west of the area left to avoid possible collapse of the west wall of the excavation.

This area's surface fill was littered with construction debris and loose earth mixed with fragments of nineteenth-century bottle glass. Much of the glass had been melted out of shape and turned blue by heat.

Beneath this debris in a deposit of muddy fill rested a rich concentration of nineteenth-century artifacts. North of the keel (starboard side) and standing upright on the hull was a small press, possibly a copy or book-binder's press. Nearby was a second press, a variety of small artifacts including two stoneware bottles (one filled with ink), pencils and pen nibs, a set of small scale weights, and a beautiful duck's head paper holder. To the west was an open wooden box containing what had been a stack of books or leather book-bindings decorated with gold leaf. All these may have been a collection of stationery supplies or the contents of an office. South and west of these artifacts against the north side of the keelson were tightly rolled bales of textiles. To the south of the keelson, the crew found champagne bottles, some broken but many still intact with corks and wine. Stored in wooden cases against the keelson, they had been lying flat, some with straw or wicker packing.

On their first evening of exploration, the Maritime

Museum staff knew they had found a very rich site, not only in the concentration of finds but in the degree of their preservation. The wet fill had apparently preserved organic materials that would not have survived in normal ground. While the archaeological crew could have spent days cataloging information and removing artifacts, they feared that anything left in the ground might be destroyed by bulldozers the next day, and so they quickly sketched and photographed and removed the artifacts to safety.

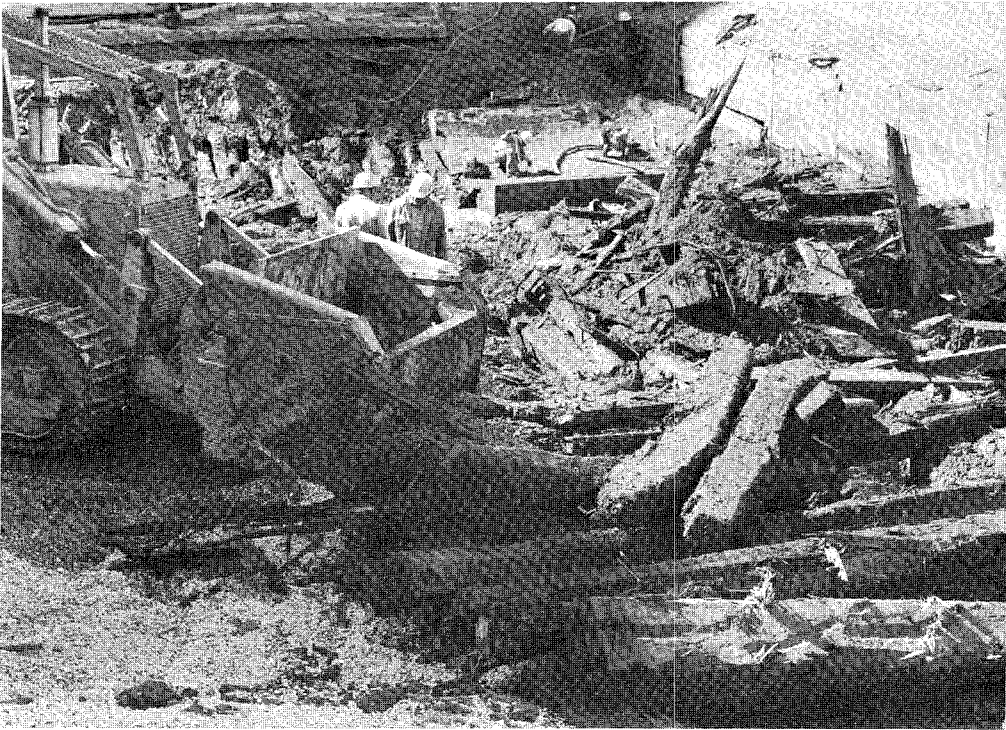
Construction work continued on the *Niantic* site on Friday, May 5, but that evening the site developer agreed to halt construction until Monday afternoon, when estimates for the cost of removing the intact hull could be received. In the interim, the museum staff was permitted to continue its archaeological investigation.

Naturally, state, federal, and museum archaeologists attending the meeting would have preferred to postpone construction for a longer period so that a detailed excavation could be made. But because it seemed that a three-day stay was all that would be granted, the museum staff was asked to continue digging and thereby save some information and artifacts rather than risk total loss.

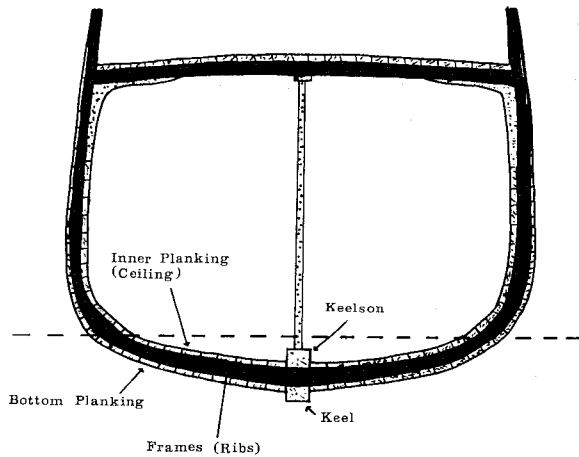
The archaeologists faced an imposing task that weekend. Two-thirds of the site designated for exposure remained to be excavated, as did the rest of the hull and the surrounding area. Although the construction crew had avoided digging in the fill inside the hull, a bulldozer had run over the ground and filled the partially excavated area with debris and loose earth.

In the course of removing these new mud deposits from the site on Saturday, the staff found many objects that meshed with their earlier discoveries—pencils and book leather, for instance. When they finally reached undisturbed material, they found many more rolls of cloth to the north of the keelson. The cloth had been stored upright in crates, but the bulldozer had destroyed the crate tops.



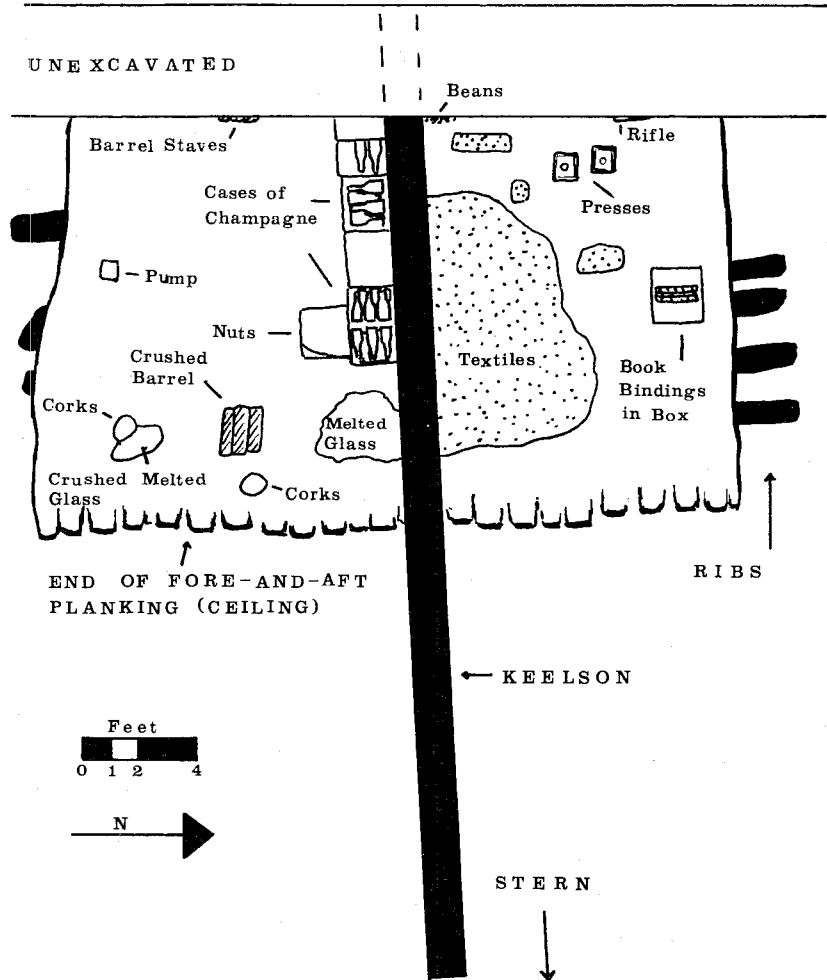


*Racing against time, the crew uncovered groups of artifacts lying about the keelson at the end of the exposed hull. Before bulldozers destroyed the Niantic's timbers, a section of the hull was preserved (visible behind the pile of bulldozed timbers).*



*This simplified drawing shows a cross-section of a single-decked wooden vessel. The Niantic's hull burned to the level indicated by the dotted horizontal line, and only the bottom of the hull remained.*

RIGHT: Grouped about the keelson were artifacts ranging from book bindings to nuts.



Near the sides of the ship north of the keelson and west of the presses amid burned material were found metal parts of several guns, including a flintlock pistol and a percussion cap rifle. A leather coat untouched by fire was also found in the area.

South of the keelson, the excavators uncovered more cases of champagne stacked two or three deep in a vertical pile next to the keelson. Nearby were several boxes of as yet unidentified nuts or beans. The remains of several crushed barrels were also uncovered, along with a deposit of straight-sided corks. The layer of intact bottles near the keelson ended about thirteen feet from the west end of the excavation. East of this area, crushed fragments of melted bottle glass were found down to the bottom of the hull interior.

A section of concrete paving found in debris below the level of the vessel's ribs south of the keelson may have been from a later building. A small mechanical pump with a fragmentary inscription in French located near the southern edge of the vessel's ribs may also have been from a later era.

When the staff attempted to dig outside the hull, the excavation filled with water, making it impossible to continue exterior digging. Accordingly, the crew hastily built a drainage ditch from this area to a lower part of the site to avoid the risk of flooding the vessel's interior.

After completely removing the fill in the *Niantic's* hull, it became evident that the deposits at the west end of the site had been lying on the interior planking (ceiling) of the vessel over the ribs. This planking ended about sixteen or seventeen feet from the west wall of the site, the rest presumably having been removed during the excavations in 1872 or 1907. Only further excavation can tell what remains inside the vessel under the Redwood Park to the west.

On Monday, May 7, it became apparent that the cost of saving the *Niantic's* hull intact was prohibitive, and a team of experts photogrammetrically recorded the hull

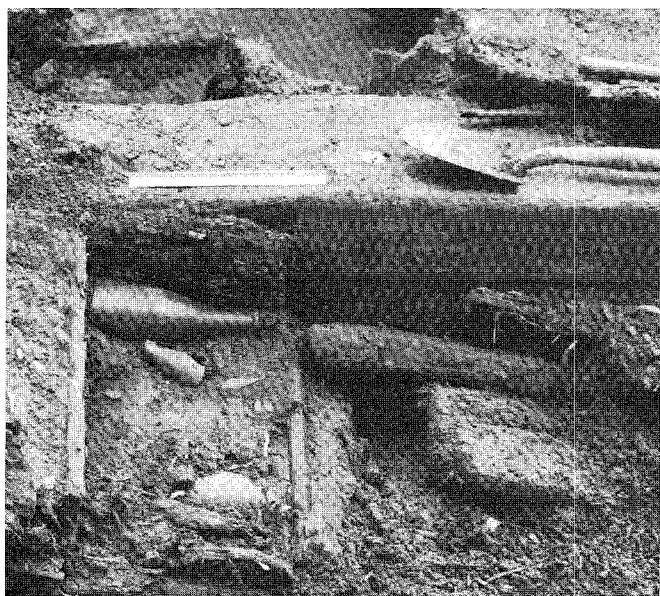
so that accurately measured drawings could be made of the remains. Finally, at the expense of the developer, two large, intact sections of the hull were removed from the construction site—the excavated portion towards the bow, which still lay buried, and the stern. The rest of the hull was bulldozed, although several large timbers were saved by the museum. Then construction workers resumed laying the foundations for their building, and the *Niantic's* grave was again covered over.

Detailed study of the *Niantic's* artifacts has only just begun. Most of the non-organic finds have been cleaned and sorted, and many of the organic finds are in cold storage awaiting decisions on conservation methods. The most significant items have been sent to the National Park Service conservation laboratory at Harpers Ferry, Virginia.

Many of the *Niantic's* artifacts relate to gold rush food and drink. About seven dozen full-size and a dozen half-size champagne bottles were recovered intact from the storage area south of the keelson. Many still contain wine, although the wire holding the corks tight had corroded away. Stored on their sides in wooden cases, the bottles appear to have been disturbed, possibly by the 1906 earthquake, because whole and broken bottles lay side by side. Of ordinary wine-bottle shape with a thick, flat string rim below the lip and a high basal kick, they have no visible mold seams. Their glass is of medium-to-dark green in color, and their overall appearance suggests a mid-nineteenth century date. The wine remaining in the bottles is muddy pinkish-red in color, sedimented, and terrible tasting. If the champagne found in 1872 was truly of "very fair flavor," it has now fully deteriorated.<sup>1</sup> According to the same report, the wine carried the Jacquesson Fils label, that of a company which is still in business in France today.



*Keepers of the storeship had stacked crates of champagne bottles along the keelson. Still holding champagne, the bottles have a large basal kick, as shown in the base fragment.*



Many nineteenth-century bottles of a different type, possibly beer bottles, were also found on the site, although only one was intact. Found scattered over a large area, many of the fragments had been burned and melted into a blue porcelain-like substance. The unburned samples of this second type of bottle exhibit a thick, rounded lip with a trace of a string rim and a small, rounded basal kick with a central nipple. Of dark green glass, they show no visible mold seams.

Also found were bottle bases of thick black glass carrying the molded inscriptions "E. R. Bristol" and "Ricketts, Bristol." The Ricketts company of Bristol, England, which produced the first machine-made bottles, operated from about 1814 to 1853.<sup>2</sup> The crew also found unattached bottle seals made of light green glass carrying the inscriptions "Old Madeira" and "Xeres" (sherry).

The museum staff also discovered two metal labels of heavy foil which might have been attached to packing cases. One was damaged with only the right half remaining. The second label, complete but slightly crumpled, reads:

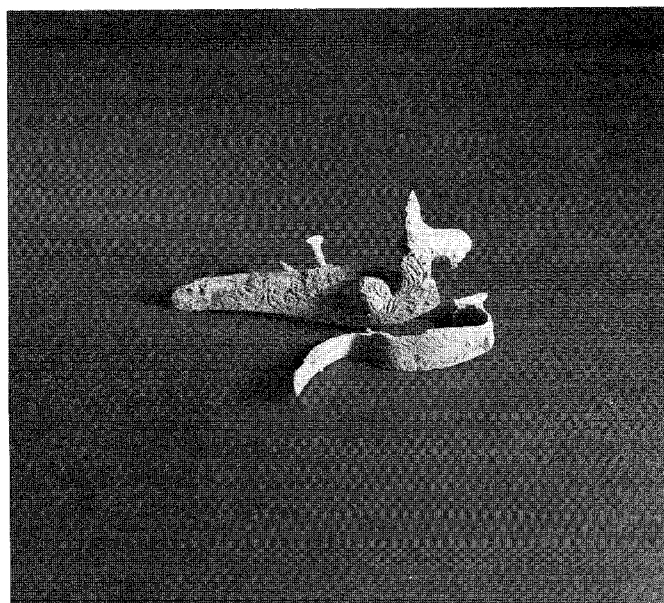
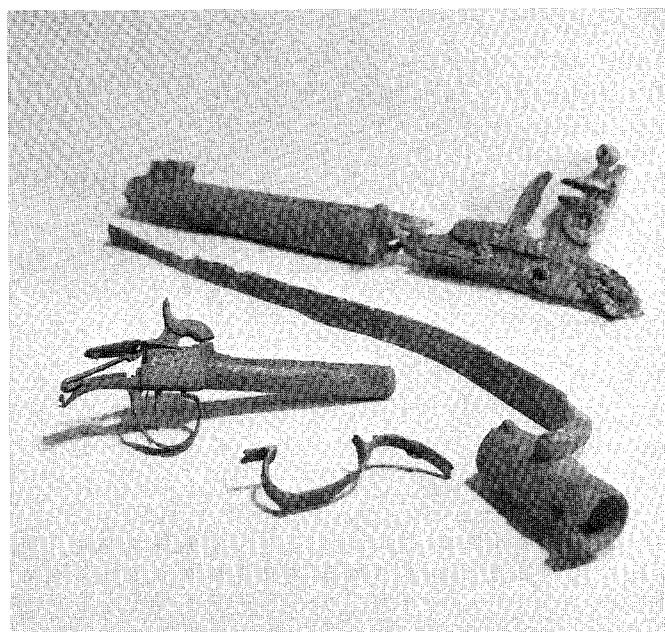
A. & E. PELLIER FRES  
SUCRS DE J. CONEAU  
MEDAILLE A L'EXPO DE PARIS EN 1834  
ANDOUILLETES  
TRUFFEES  
AU MANS ET AU CROIS[IC?]

Carrying references to gold medals received in 1834 and 1844, the labels might have looked backward to medals received long before their contents were produced. The imported sausages and truffles listed on the second label indicate the existence of luxuries in gold rush San Francisco.

Another category of artifacts discovered in the *Niantic's* hull was stationery supplies and office equipment, found north of the keelson. Most important are two metal presses, each about eighteen inches high and about thirteen-by-seventeen inches at the base. Both have a



*Gun parts found in the Niantic include (clockwise from top): flintlock gun lock and part of barrel; bayonet; trigger guard; and percussion cap pistol.*



*The decoration on this trigger guard and part of a gun lock have lost definition after being buried in Bay mud for over a century.*

central screw which moves an upper plate down onto the heavy base plate. Perhaps they were presses for making copies of letters or for bookbinding. Fragments of book leather were found between the plates of one press.

Two stacks of gold-tooled leather book bindings were also found nearby, one resting in an open wooden box that sat on the hull planking. One leather fragment carries the word "Journal" on it, and a separate piece of book spine holds the maker's name, "Wm Rose N.Y." Probably these journals, if such they were, were piled together until the paper between the covers rotted away. Now in cold storage, they await further study.

Found near these items were several dozen pencils. Circular in section, one was marked "Faber" and several others read, "Calligraphic Black Lead, E. Wolff [?] London." Pen nib holders, metal pen nibs, and two small, brown stoneware bottles, one of which still contained what appears to be ink, were also close at hand.

Additional nearby finds were two brass-plated objects which look like clips from the top of a clipboard, a set of small circular scale weights, and three small metal gauges. These gauges are about two inches long with circular brass cases containing square-sectioned metal rods marked with numbers. Also found here was one of the most attractive artifacts from the site, a decorative brass duck's head paper holder.

One of the most important discoveries on the *Niantic* was the two to three dozen rolls of cloth stored on the north side of the keelson. Tightly rolled and about six inches in diameter and two feet high, most of the rolls were stacked vertically in wooden crates.

The textile material has been identified as an early form of linoleum. Backed with a vegetable fiber coated with a linseed oil base, the rolls have colorful geometric designs in yellow, white, red, and blue. Perhaps this was the "oil carpeting" included in the cargo lists of vessels arriving in gold rush San Francisco.<sup>3</sup> Extremely fragile, the rolls have been kept damp in cold storage until a



suitable preservation treatment can be determined.

Many miscellaneous items also surfaced during the excavation. Several metal parts of guns or rifles were found, some in burned deposits north of the keelson, including a flintlock pistol, a percussion-cap rifle or musket, a small pistol, a rifle or musket barrel, a small gun lock, a rifle sight, a hammer, a decorated trigger guard, a bayonet, and a bullet mold. The *Niantic*'s original wooden log windlass was also uncovered by the construction crews. The excavation's oldest dateable artifact was a Spanish silver piece from the reign of Charles IV (1788-1808), found unstratified. Spanish currency was still common in mid-century San Francisco.

Small amounts of nineteenth-century ceramic material—including stoneware, transfer-printed ware, and Chinese porcelain—and metal spikes, nails, sheet iron pieces, and copper sheathing from the hull were also unearthed. In addition, the museum crew dug up iron shovel blades, an axe head, a knife blade, a pocket knife, a scissors handle, a door lock and door bolt, a trunk handle, a buckle, a brass candlestick, a pair of brass dividers, and a telescope eyepiece.

In retrospect, the most significant archaeological discovery of the *Niantic* excavation was that the largest number of artifacts—the champagne, the rolls of textiles, and the presses and other office supplies—were placed in the bottom of the hull of the storeship, this almost certainly between late 1849 and the fire of May 4, 1851. They could not have been cargo on the *Niantic* before she reached San Francisco, because she was a whaler, not a cargo carrier. The artifacts were stored in the bilges of the vessel, compartments that would have been wet at sea and that would have been filled with ballast to keep the ship properly trimmed. For her artifacts to have been stored at a later date, another fire must have raged on the site after that. Finally, when the *Niantic*'s hull was uncovered in 1872, the ship was considered a curiosity and her champagne assumed to date

from the gold rush. No mention was made then of her hull having been used after 1851.

A portion of the hull's interior fill remained intact until 1978 because the west end of the hull had been protected under a different building lot or lots when the several *Niantic* buildings were erected. A 1906 lot map suggests this, and, in the excavation site itself, the remains of a small brick building were visible in the south wall of the site to the west of the *Niantic* Building lot. This brick building would have covered much of the area where the museum crew found the undisturbed artifacts. Presumably the shallow building foundations erected there after 1851 never exposed the *Niantic*'s hull.

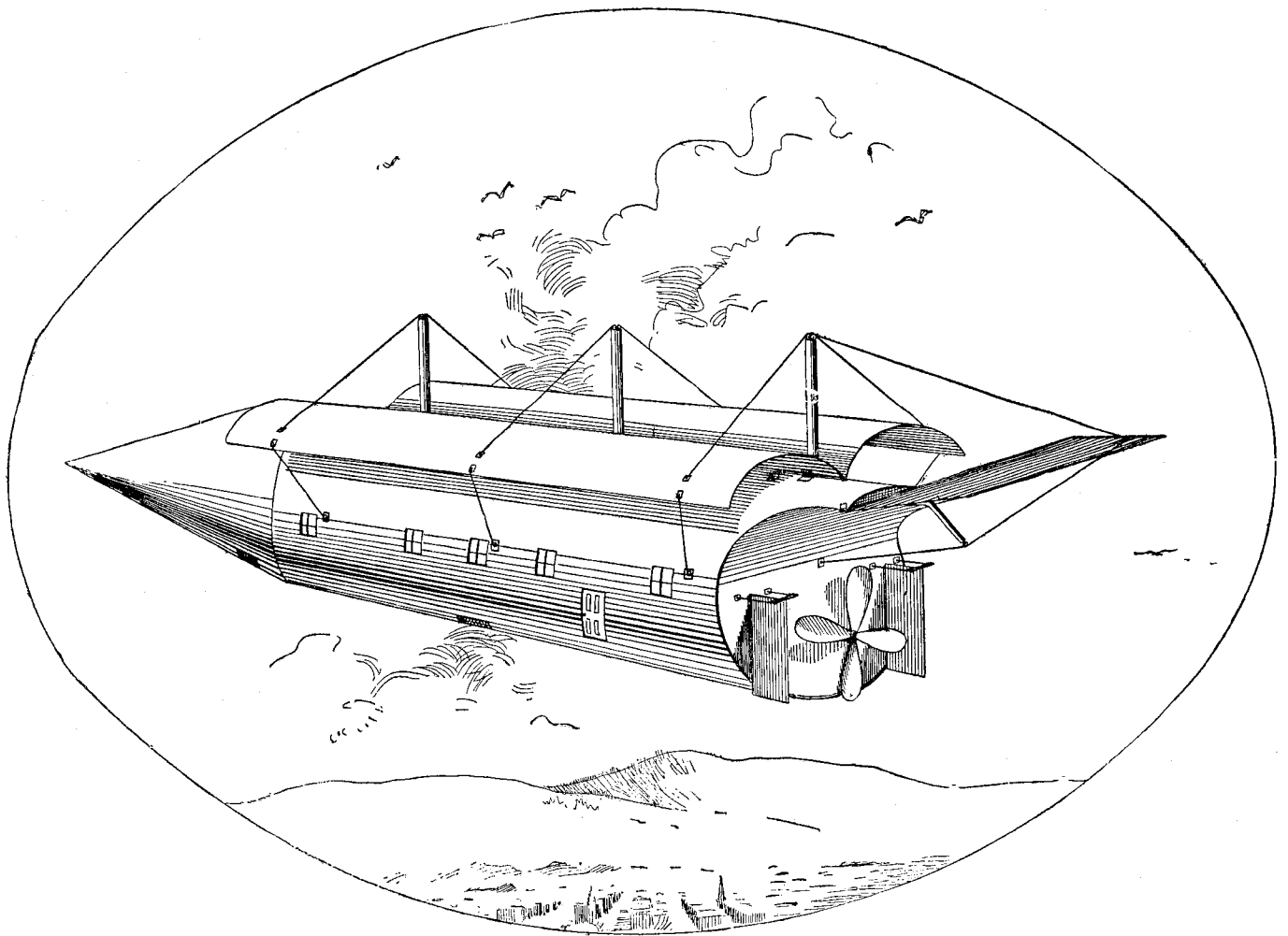
More of the *Niantic*'s secrets may yet be discovered. Only about ninety feet of her one-hundred-twenty-foot length have been explored, because her bow section most likely lies under Redwood Park. Perhaps time and money will one day be available to properly excavate her remains with the care and attention she deserves.

The poster reproduced on page 327 is designed by Jerry Berman Associates and copyright J. P. Mahoney & Co. The drawings and the photograph of the bottles *in situ* are by Isabel Bullen. The photograph of the bulldozer is by John Maounis, and all the others are by John Kortum.

## Notes

1. T. A. Barry, and B. A. Patten, *Men and Memories of San Francisco in the "Spring of '50"* (San Francisco, A. F. Bancroft, 1873), p. 136.
2. Ivor Noel Hume, "The Glass Wine Bottle in Colonial Virginia," *Journal of Glass Studies*, 3 (1961): 105.
3. Louis J. Rasmussen, *San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists*, Vol. III, November 7, 1851 to June 17, 1852, San Francisco Historic Records, San Francisco, 1967.

# "Navigating the Upper Strata" and the Quest for Dirigibility



*Built of aluminum and equipped with giant wings, the airship of Dr. C. A. Smith was confidently predicted to land under the Statue of Liberty just 40 hours after leaving San Francisco.*



The sight of a silvery-skinned dirigible gliding silently and effortlessly overhead offers a pleasant, almost ethereal reminder of the early days of aviation when man first mastered travel through the air. Impractical in today's era of supersonic jets, the airship once seemed the perfect form of long-distance transportation.

Few present-day admirers realize that the history of the dirigible in California dates back to 1849 when Rufus Porter of New York first proposed flying argonauts to the gold fields in a giant "aerial locomotive." Shortly thereafter, ingenious and intrepid San Franciscans, capitalizing on the area's superior weather conditions, experimented with a variety of schemes to link California with the East Coast by air. An airborne alternative to the railroad and stage, many believed, would bring fame and fortune to the lucky aeronaut at the controls, and the resulting attempts to achieve that goal produced one of the most compelling chapters in California's transportation history.

By the mid-nineteenth century, many of the world's aeronauts considered the airship to be the ultimate flying machine. Attempts to control and direct spherical balloons had failed, and engines capable of sustaining flight by slightly heavier-than-air machines did not yet exist. On the other hand, these pioneer "birdmen" reasoned, if an engine and rudder could be attached to an elongated gas-filled balloon, the age-old problem of flight might be solved. This notion led to the invention of the dirigible, which, simply put, is a balloon that can be steered or given direction.

From the 1860s to the early 1900s, dozens of local inventors risked life, limb, and reputation to perfect the dirigible. Seeking to transcend the hardships and dangers of overland travel, would-be aeronauts produced fantastic plans for huge airships capable of transporting hundreds of passengers and tons of freight at speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour. The Statue of Liberty, predicted one optimistic inventor, would be reached only three days after leaving San Francisco.

Enthralled by these prospects, San Franciscans willingly gambled great sums of money to finance these experiments. Models of flying machines were exhibited in public buildings, and local newspapers promoted any plan that promised transcontinental flight. Many of the seemingly plausible schemes were calculated merely to hoodwink the gullible, while others, for all the accompanying fanfare, ended as expensive blunders.

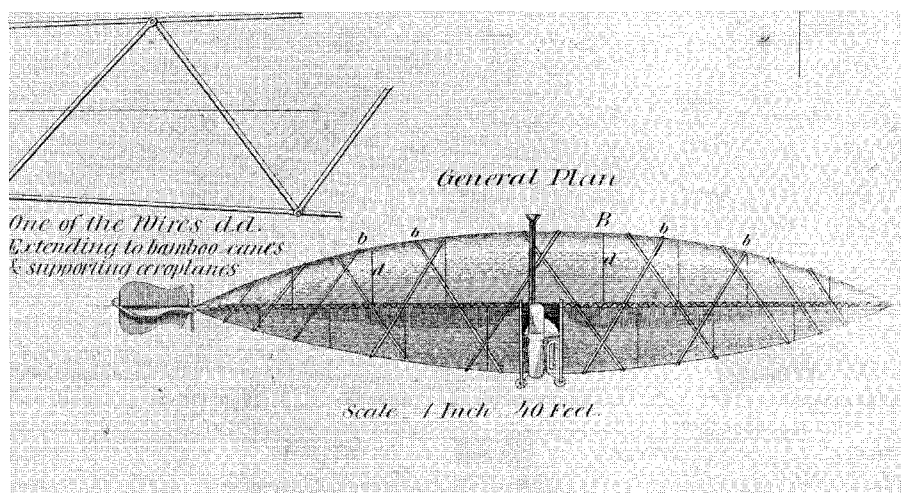
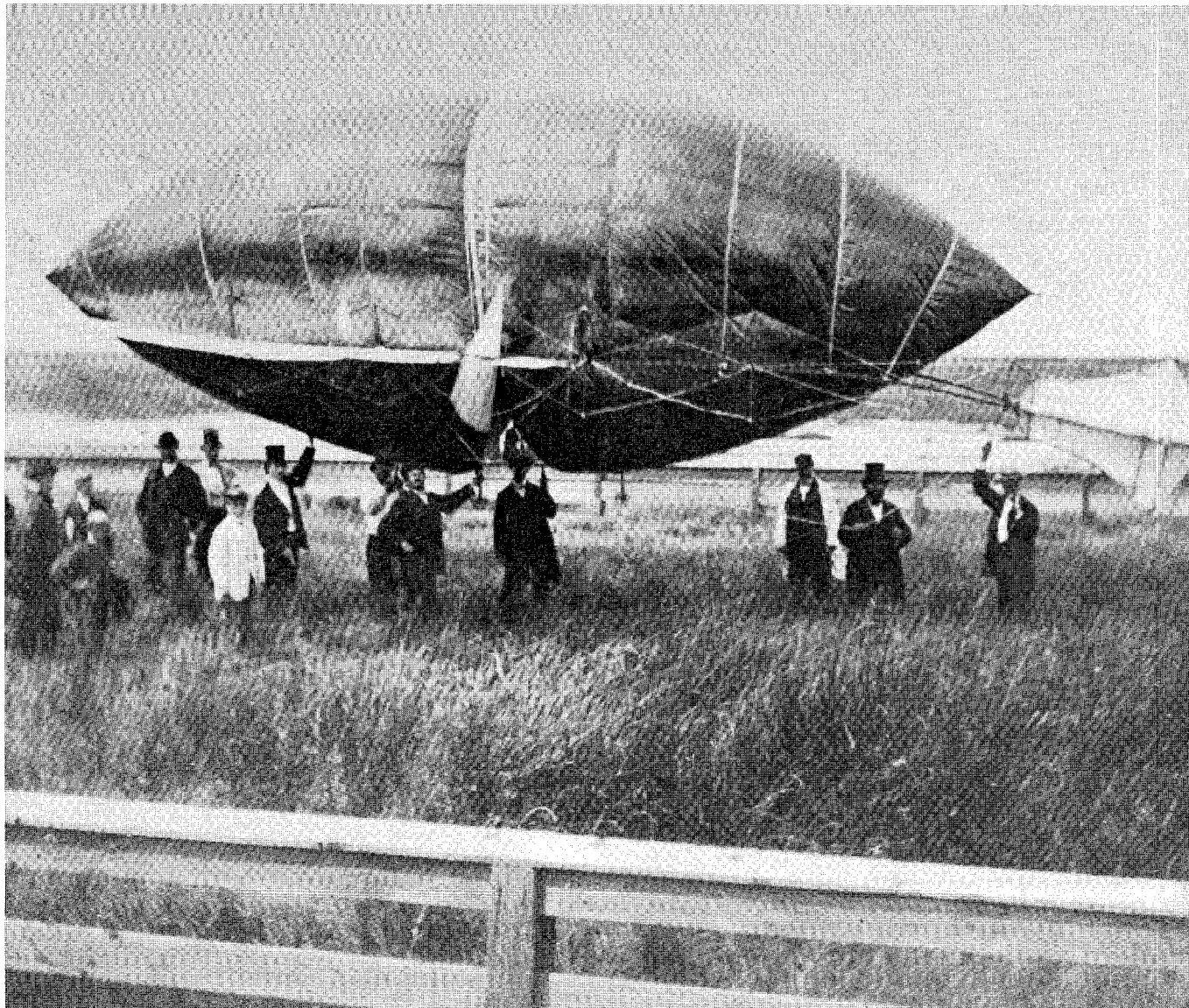
Although the Wright Brothers are the best remembered aviation experimenters, a number of San Francisco inventors operating in obscurity achieved many important aviation firsts. In the same year that land-lovers completed the transcontinental railroad (1869), a balloon-glider made America's first powered flight near San Francisco. In 1904, a former tight-rope walker flew the country's first dirigible—over a baseball field in Oakland.

Frederick Marriott, publisher of San Francisco's *Newsletter*, was California's first and most remarkable airship inventor. An Englishman by birth and co-founder of the *Illustrated London News*, Marriott had dabbled in aviation as early as the 1840s. Traveling to California in 1848 as a gold seeker, he soon discovered that his literary skills would reap him greater rewards. In addition to founding the influential *Newsletter*, the publisher started a half-dozen other tabloids and counted among his friends such literary titans as Samuel Clemens, Bret Harte, Ambrose Bierce, and Fitzhugh Ludlow.

After amassing a small fortune in publishing, the Britisher turned his attention to aerial experimentation. In 1866, the flying editor, as he was called, incorporated the Aerial Steam Navigation Company to raise \$1 million for his ethereal avocation. Utilizing the *Newsletter* for publicity, Marriott attracted several prominent San Franciscans as stockholders, and no less a financier than William C. Ralston served as the company treasurer.

Ambitious and future-oriented, Marriott proposed building a fleet of airships that would compete with the





Proclaimed as the Eighth Wonder of the World, the Avitor Hermes, Jr., made its maiden flight around San Mateo's Shell Mound Race Track in 1869. The *Alta California*, unimpressed with Marriott's invention, described it as a "winged whale."

This side view of the 150-foot Avitor depicts the guiding rudder at the hind end, the engine and passenger room in the middle, and the wires used to support the gas-filled bag. Lionel Varicas, Marriott's engineer, drew these plans.





*Frederick Marriott (1805-1884), the cherub-like editor of the prestigious San Francisco Newsletter, invented the Avitor, America's first self-propelled lighter-than-air flying machine.*

transcontinental railroad and link the Golden State to the east via the airways. As a first step, the editor hired a construction crew and established an aviation works at Shell Mound Park in San Mateo County.

After several irritating delays, Marriott unveiled a prototype airship named the *Avitor Hermes, Jr.* Looking like a fat cigar, the *Avitor* improved on previous inventions by combining the lifting power of lighter-than-air balloons with the wings and engine of heavier-than-air flying machines. Measuring thirty-seven feet in length, the *Avitor* was powered by a small brass alcohol-burning steam engine which drove two propellers. For stability, Marriott affixed wings to the sides of the hydrogen-filled balloon envelope. Most importantly, he attached a rudder to the stern which could control the airship's direction and altitude. This last feature made the *Avitor* more than a balloon; it was a dirigible.

On July 2, 1869, the *Avitor* made its maiden flight within the safe confines of the Shell Mound hangar. Two days later, a confident Marriott gave a public

demonstration outdoors. Before a startled and cheering audience, the craft rose gently from the ground and began to fly. An excited reporter from the San Francisco *Times* described this milestone in aviation history:

The morning was beautiful and still—scarcely a breath of air stirring. The conditions were favorable for success. The gasometer was fully inflated, and the model was floated out of the building. In six minutes steam was got up—the rudder set to give a slight curve to the course of the vessel—and the valves opened. With the first turn of the propellers she rose until the rate of five miles an hour was attained. The position of the rudder caused her to describe a great circle, around which she passed twice, occupying about five minutes each time. Lines had been fastened to both bow and stern, which were held by two men, who followed her track, and had sufficient ado to keep up with her at a “dog trot.”

Clearly proud of his achievement, Marriott's article in the *Newsletter* further extolled the potential of his invention:

Next in point of speed to the telegraph, it opens communication between distant points, bearing its men and messages through the air, while the railroad drags its heavy burden of freight. . . . No savages in war paint shall interrupt its passage over and across our continent . . . no waiting for trade winds; no necessity of lying becalmed under tropical suns; no extortions from huge corporations who monopolize the great routes of travel.

The *Avitor's* maiden voyage represented the first successful controlled flight of a powered vehicle in the United States. Although the ship was unmanned, Marriott had achieved a major step in the conquest of the air, and newspapers across the country and Europe carried the exciting news of the Shell Mound flight. The London *Dispatch* hailed Marriott and prophetically exclaimed: “The wonderful California flying machine, we are informed, will soon wing its way across the Rocky Mountains from San Francisco to New York, to the great loss of the now superfluous Pacific Railway.” One publication, however, remained unimpressed. The

*Rufus Porter, the editor of the Scientific American, published his plans for an aerial locomotive in a book entitled The Practicability of Traveling Pleasantly and Safely from New York to California in Three Days (New York, 1849). Porter was the first to develop a plan for transcontinental flight.*

prestigious *Scientific American* discounted Marriott's achievement by pointing out that the *Avitor* could only fly in calm weather and could not negotiate headwinds. Marriott retorted, "We do not expect to build Rome in a day."

Following the two successful flights, Marriott brought the *Avitor* to the Mechanic's Pavilion in San Francisco for all to see. Making daily flights inside the huge structure to the fanfare of marching bands, this engineering wonder impressed school children and adults alike, including one young writer, Bret Harte, who composed a poem in honor of the *Avitor*.

Buoyed by the success of his prototype, the flying editor next announced plans for the construction of a full-size airship which would fly at speeds of 150 miles per hour and reach New York in three days. To attract financial support, he displayed a drawing of the new dirigible flying over the Golden Gate with engineering drawings showing details of the engine, propellers, and balloon cylinder.

In the face of Marriott's optimistic predictions for transcontinental flight, a financial panic in the 1870s scuttled his plans, and the full-size *Avitor* never became airborne. Regardless, Marriott's invention could never have succeeded because steam engines in the 1870s could not produce sufficient speed to permit the dirigible to fly against prevailing winds. Undaunted, however, the ingenious editor turned to designing heavier-than-air machines and in the process coined the word "aeroplane." Although Marriott died a frustrated and unappreciated aeronaut, to this man of letters must go the acclaim of inventing America's first dirigible.

Dreams of lighter-than-air transcontinental flight did not die with Marriott, although several years passed before anyone revived the idea. On September 1, 1896, the San Francisco *Call* carried a large, curious drawing

of a mammoth rocket-like airship with flapping wings soaring over the city. This sleek flying machine *a la Jules Verne* was the brainchild of Dr. Charles A. Smith of San Francisco.

The imaginative doctor promised that this cone-shaped vessel would reach New York City in a mere forty hours at speeds in excess of 100 miles per hour. To attract financial support for his Atlantic and Pacific Aerial Navigation Company, Smith displayed a working model at the Spreckels Building in San Francisco. The *Call* article described the model as follows:

It looks just like the business end of a rocket. It has a conical point, a round body, and at the rear end a brass fan whirrs lustily every time a live wire is hitched on to the electric motor in the interior of the concern. Two wings, like those of a beetle, rise and fall from the top of the cylinder, and a few small windows and three rudders make up the latest of flying machines. . . . Will it work? There is no doubt about it, say the inventors, and they point proudly to the model as it rests on two stools in a shop on Market Street.

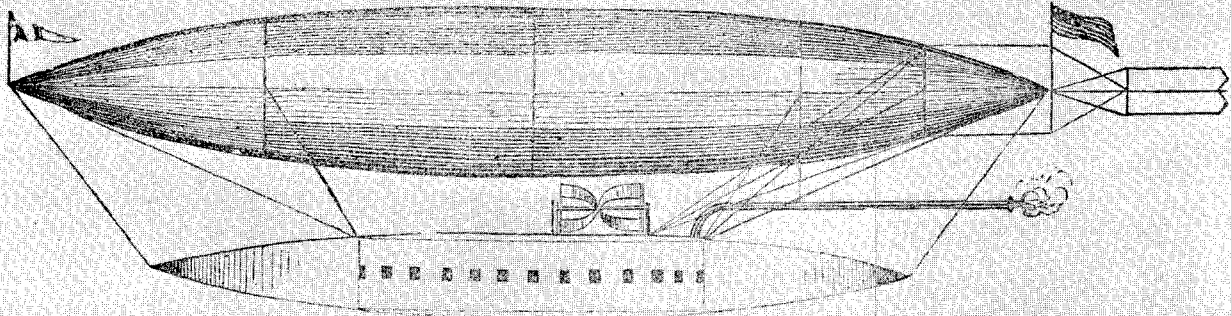
While Dr. Smith's model, which was built of zinc, undoubtedly fascinated onlookers, his idea for a full-size airship was even more unbelievable. Certainly the attachment of flapping wings to a hydrogen balloon was a novel approach. Moreover, Smith proposed to construct the entire machine out of aluminum. Measuring 105 feet in length, the rigid airship was to be powered by gasoline or electricity working a rear propeller and the wings. Some 17,000 square feet of sheet aluminum would cover an air-tight chamber containing 89,500 cubic feet of hydrogen gas. Although the ship would weigh 2,000 pounds, the inventor calculated that its 6230 pounds of lifting power would be sufficient to make it buoyant. When not in flight, an anchor would hold the airship to the ground.

The *Call* concluded its reportage of Dr. Smith's airship on this optimistic note:

Its flight, say the inventors, will be swift and even, like the swoop of an eagle or the steady course of a bird of prey.



## BEST ROUTE TO CALIFORNIA.



R. PORTER & CO., (office, room No. 40 in the Sun Buildings,—entrance 128 Fulton-street, New-York,) are making active progress in the construction of an Aerial Transport, for the 'express purpose of carrying passengers between New York and California. This transport will have a capacity to carry from 50 to 100 passengers, at a speed of 60 to 100 miles per hour. It is expected to put this machine in operation about the 1st of April, 1849. It is proposed to carry a limited number of passengers—not exceeding 300—for \$50, including board, and the transport is expected to make a trip to the gold region and back in seven days. The price of passage to California is fixed at \$200, with the exception above mentioned. Upwards of 200 passage tickets at \$50 each have been engaged prior to Feb. 15. Books open for subscribers as above.

It will soar at a height of from one to three miles, and will have a grappling-hook to stay its speed when it becomes necessary to alight as it dives down toward the earth. . . . Its first long flight will be to New York, and the inventors say that forty hours after it spreads its wings over the Golden Gate it will alight under the shadow of the Statue of Liberty.

Of course, Dr. Smith's winged aluminum airship never did alight under the Statue of Liberty. Nor is there evidence that he ever progressed beyond the little model at his Market Street shop. While promising much, Dr. Smith had not mastered the basic principles of aerodynamics.

Several years later, the San Francisco *Examiner* of December 30, 1900, published a forward-looking article by Charles Stanley of San Francisco, who glowingly predicted that:

The twentieth century will open with the airship. . . . The field for their usefulness is large and varied. War will cease to be, and the Nations of the earth will be at peace. The unknown corners of the world will be laid bare, and the dangers and delays of travel by land and by sea will be eliminated, and California will have the honor to be the mother of this great invention.

Of course, the airship that would bring peace to the world existed only in Stanley's vivid imagination, but unlike his predecessors, Stanley grounded his ideas on sound scientific principles. A mechanic and engineer by profession, Stanley had spent years studying wind currents, aerodynamics, and the airships of other aeronauts.

On May 9, 1899, the engineer had incorporated the Stanley Aerial Navigation Company to finance his plans for an airship. A detailed prospectus issued by the company reported, in fact, that "there is nothing theoretical—not the smallest detail—in the construction or navigation of the Stanley airship." Confident in his design, Stanley invited the public to his "shipyard" near the panhandle of Golden Gate Park to inspect his engineering drawings, working model, and the construction of the full-size airship. Impressed by his demonstration, several families invested substantial funds in this latest airborne enterprise.

Stanley's assurances to the contrary, the craft was entirely theoretical. Like Smith before him, he was infatuated with aluminum, and he proposed building a cylindrical-shaped vessel of aluminum. Coned tips

would enable the airship to maneuver against air currents, and bow and stern propellers and rudders would guide the ship and move it forwards and backwards. Planes attached to the sides, he theorized, would provide stability. Propellers affixed to the top of the shell would drive it to the ground when landing. In this way, precious hydrogen gas would not have to be released from the shell's six air-tight compartments. The lower portion would contain engine rooms and compartments for forty passengers and their baggage. When complete, the Stanley airship was to measure 228 feet in length, weigh 13,000 pounds, lift 21,000 pounds, and fly at speeds of seventy miles an hour above storms and against air currents.

To satisfy his stockholders, Stanley planned to make a maiden flight from San Francisco to San Jose. Then the inventor hoped to surprise the world by taking the airship to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis where he would win \$200,000 in prize money. For mysterious reasons, however, the project stopped, and Stanley's dream of world peace and aerial navigation faded with it.

The airships of Marriott, Smith, and Stanley all lacked engines sufficiently powerful to sustain flight against prevailing winds or were simply too heavy to be controllable. Marriott's *Avitor*, for example, could only fly on perfectly calm days and at speeds of five miles per hour. In Europe, however, such brilliant aeronauts as Alberto Santo-Dumont had overcome this problem by utilizing the new lightweight gasoline internal combustion engines. With the advent of the automobile engine, it would be only a matter of time before an American would achieve dirigibility.

In 1903, the same year that the Wright Brothers made their immortal flight, a San Francisco physician by the name of August Greth finally realized the elusive aeronaut's goal. His accomplishment, however, has been relegated to obscurity. Fortunately, a feature article in the *Scientific American* and a front page story in the San

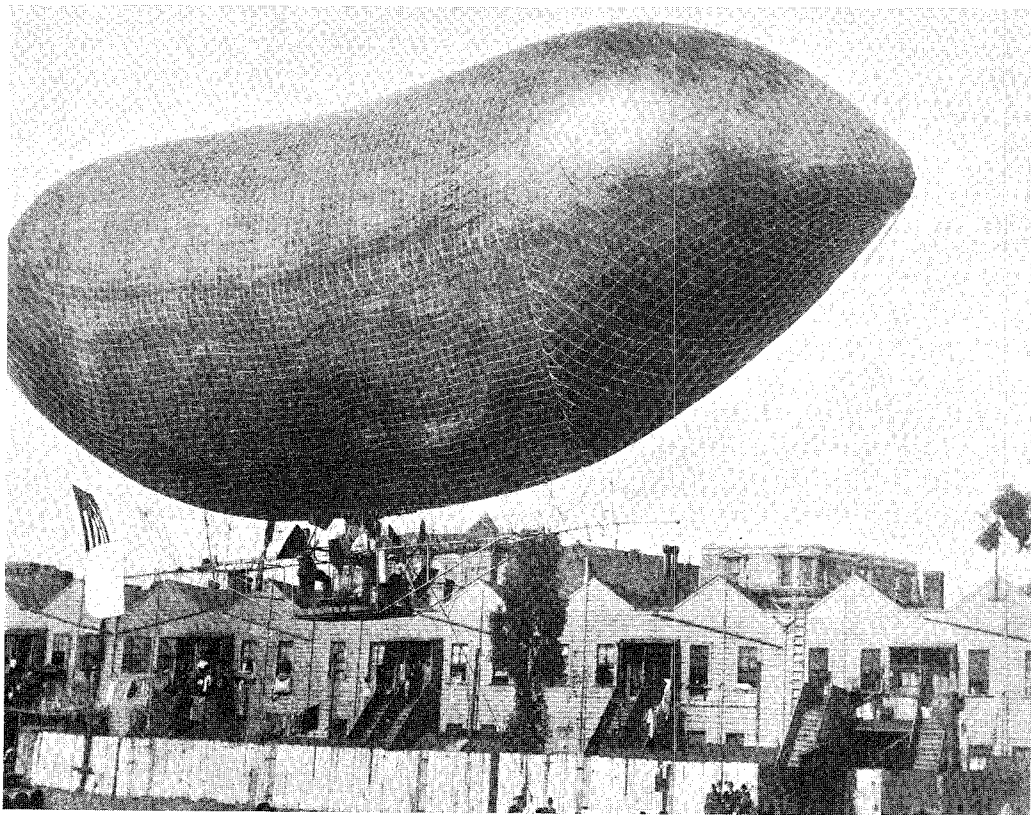
Francisco *Chronicle* have preserved the details of the doctor's historic flight over the city in the *California Eagle*. Recognizing the importance of that event, the *Chronicle*, on October 19, 1903, proudly proclaimed, "The first trip in Dirigible Balloon on the continent is made in the City of San Francisco." After a half-century of trial and error, an American had developed a successful dirigible.

Dr. Greth's historic flight culminated years of study and experimentation. A native of Alsace, Greth became interested in aviation while in the French army and soon conceived the idea of building his own airship. In 1882, he moved to San Francisco and obtained a degree in medicine. Soon thereafter, Greth resumed his experiments in lighter-than-air flight. In 1897, the physician founded the American Navigation Company and established an aviation works on a vacant lot behind 1517 Market Street. Six years later, Greth produced his first full-size airship, the *California Eagle*.

Having once witnessed one of Santo-Dumont's flights and undoubtedly learning from the pioneer aeronaut, Greth designed his airship with great advances over previous experiments. His *California Eagle* measured eighty feet in length, and its balloon cylinder held 50,000 cubic feet of hydrogen gas. In order to keep the balloon envelope rigid, he surrounded it with a sturdy net, below which was suspended a cage for the pilot and a 500-pound, twelve-horsepower automobile engine. The engine drove two propellers that could be moved to turn the vessel in any direction. (The airships of Santo-Dumont and others had had only one propeller, and altitude could be changed only by the pilot himself shifting his weight.) Thus, the Greth airship incorporated several technological advances that made it the most sophisticated of the era.

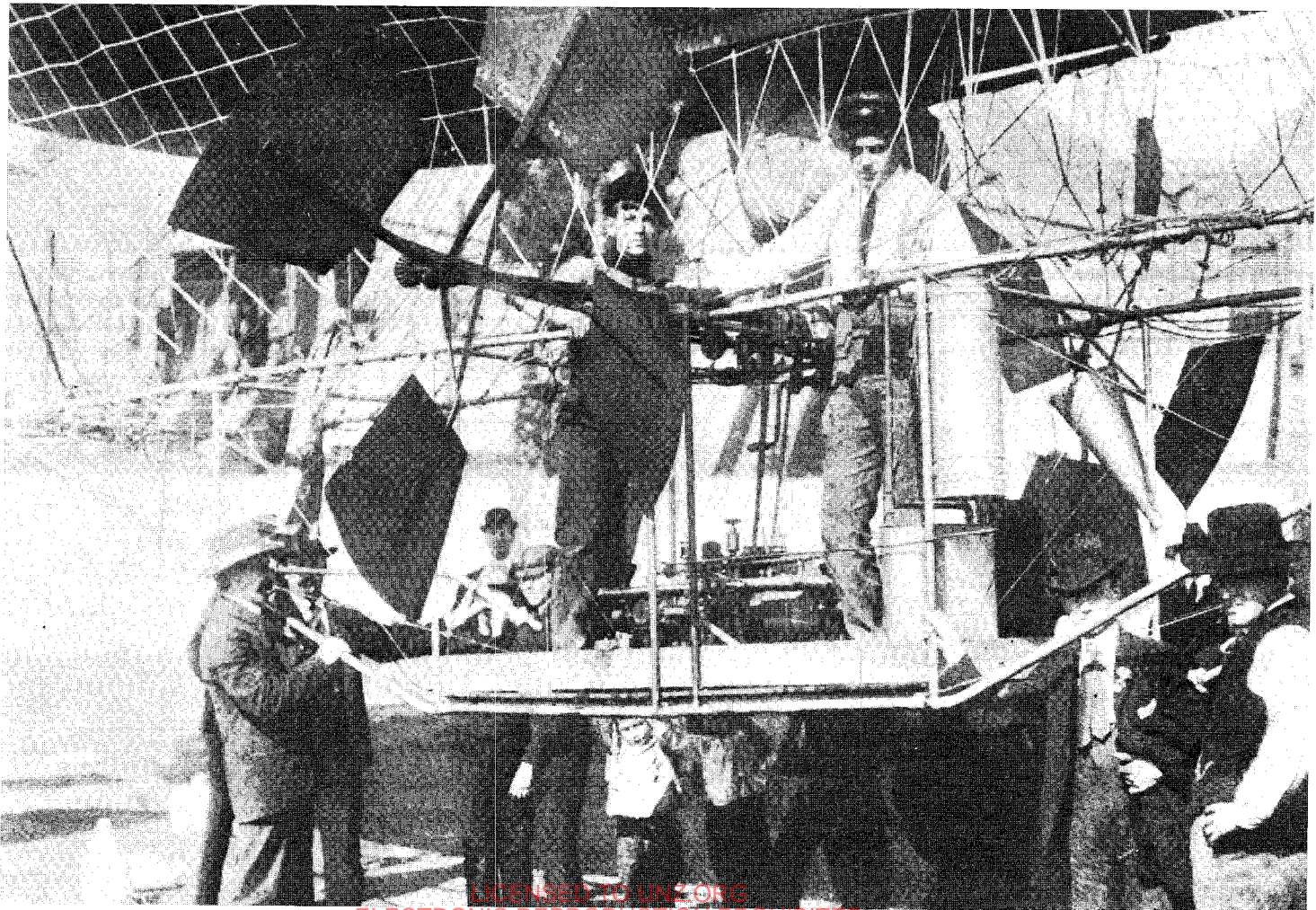
Once Greth's dirigible was completed in 1903, he made several test flights over Market Street with a strong cable holding the *Eagle* to the ground. His semi-rigid dirigible, he believed, now possessed the capability





*On August 18, 1903, the California Eagle rose above the rooftops of San Francisco to an altitude of 2000 feet. Resembling a giant sausage, the dirigible glided over the city before plunging into San Francisco Bay.*

*This detail of Greth's California Eagle shows the cage that held the engine, the propeller mechanism, and the pilot.*





of successfully maneuvering in unpredictable air currents and flying in turbulent as well as calm weather.

By October 18, the doctor was ready to "cut loose" and fly the airship around the city. Watched by a curious Sunday morning crowd, the *California Eagle* rose from the ground and quickly obtained an altitude of 2,000 feet. According to the *Chronicle*, the craft maneuvered beautifully and turned at will. Astonishing thousands of earth-bound onlookers, this sausage-shaped craft then proceeded to fly over the fashionable homes of the city. Exhilarated and confident, Greth headed west. Then disaster struck. According to the inventor, the fog burned off and caused the dirigible's hydrogen gas to expand, and the airship accordingly began to gain altitude. In a state of panic, Greth opened the gas valve so as to descend and, hopefully, land in Golden Gate Park or the Presidio. His engine stalled, however, and the wind carried him over the Bay and then plunged his craft into the water. Fortunately, the Fort Point life station crew pulled the bewildered aeronaut out of the chilly water. This, however, was not the end of his troubles, as the *Chronicle* reported:

The lifting force of the balloon being still sufficient to keep the car off the ground, it required the assistance of a considerable number of soldiers, who had been attracted to the spot, to prevent the vessel from taking a trip upward by itself. . . . B. R. Saxby, Dr. Greth's assistant, opened the throat valve for the purpose of collapsing the balloon, preparatory to removal. This proved the precursor to a series of minor accidents. Saxby was first met by the flood of escaping hydrogen gas, and immediately went "down and out." The assisting soldiers immediately let go the ropes to help Saxby, causing the balloon to start upward, and the next moment one of the soldiers, who had been caught by a dangling rope, was hanging by the leg, head downward, about fifteen feet from the ground. The balloon was quickly captured, however, and the soldier released from his precarious position. Then Dr. Greth took a hand at letting out the gas, and was also overcome. He and Saxby, however, both recovered within a few moments and the chapter of accidents was closed. The airship was finally loaded on a dray and carted back to the shed.

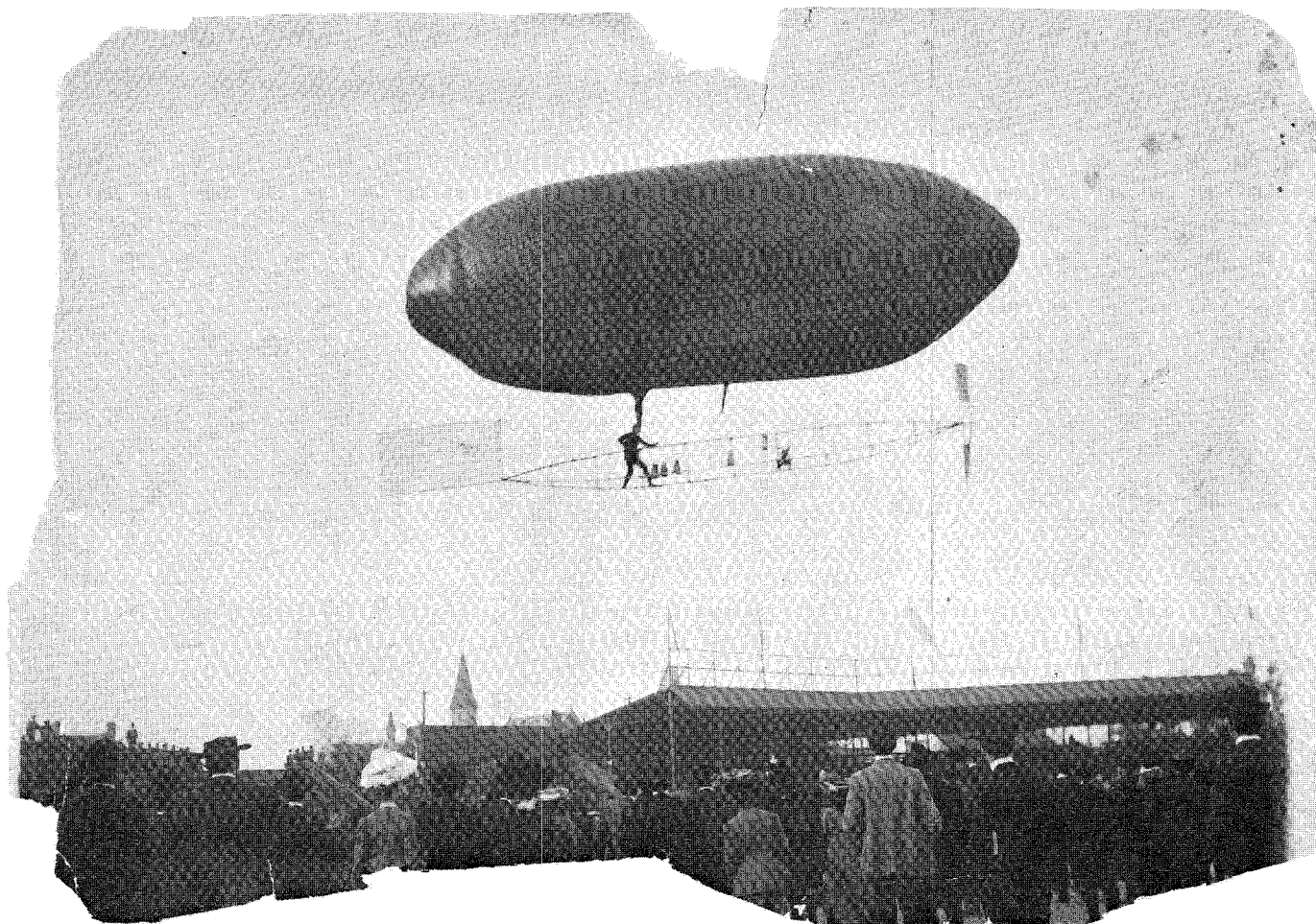
Despite this somewhat ignominious end, the two-hour flight of the *California Eagle* was an aviation milestone. *Jane's Pocket Book of Airships* (1976) lists the Greth dirigible as America's first. During his flight, the doctor had proven the practicability of his twin-propeller steering device and the general navigability of his vessel. The perplexing problem of "navigating the upper strata" where strong currents buffeted the bulky airships, however, remained unsolved.

In the annals of aviation, Greth's accomplishment ranks second to that of entertainer-inventor Thomas Scott Baldwin, who is generally credited with building the first successful American dirigible. (Greth's untimely plunge into San Francisco Bay ruined his otherwise momentous flight.)

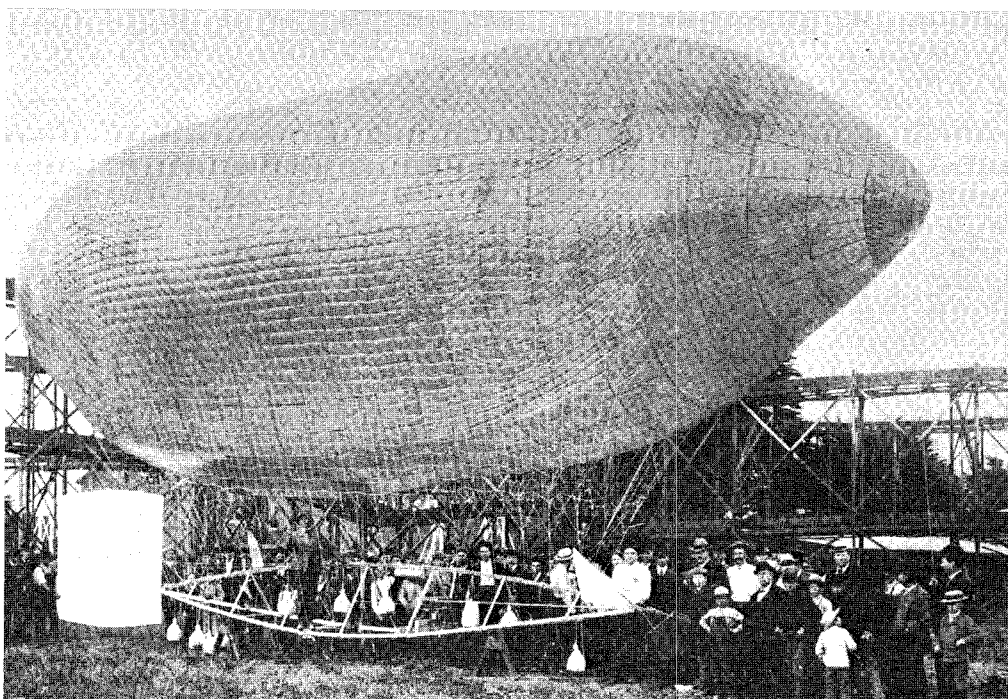
Baldwin, a native of Missouri, came to San Francisco in 1885 and quickly caused a sensation by walking a tightrope from the balcony of the Cliff House to Seal Rocks and back. With an eye to thrilling crowds and making money, Baldwin became interested in parachutes, for as an amateur balloonist, he sought a way to safely "bail out" when an emergency arose. His experiments led to the perfection of the first vented, collapsible silk parachute.

To prove the reliability of his invention, Baldwin proposed to jump from a balloon over Golden Gate Park; his manager promised to pay this nineteenth-century sky-diver a dollar for every foot he fell. On Sunday morning, January 30, 1887, an anxious crowd of over 10,000 gathered in the park to watch Baldwin's daring stunt. Climbing into a balloon with his parachute and ascending to an altitude of 3000 feet, the pioneer aeronaut leaped out of the balloon's basket and gently floated to the earth before an eager crowd—\$3000 richer.





*With Captain Thomas Scott Baldwin at the controls, the California Arrow soared over Oakland. Experiencing total freedom, the aeronaut controlled the airship's altitude simply by running along the catwalk.*



*The California Arrow, surrounded by well-wishers at Idora Park in Oakland, prepared for its maiden flight on July 29, 1904. Baldwin's airship became the first in America to take off and return safely to its starting place.*



With these thrills behind him, the intrepid aeronaut turned to dirigibles. Following with keen interest the flights of Santo-Dumont, Count Zeppelin, and Greth, Baldwin decided that the key to a successful airship was a powerful yet lightweight engine. When he made the acquaintance of a young motorcycle racer by the name of Glenn Hammond Curtiss, Baldwin admired Curtiss' two-cylinder engine and acquired one for his airship. (Curtiss later became one of America's great aviators and airplane builders.)

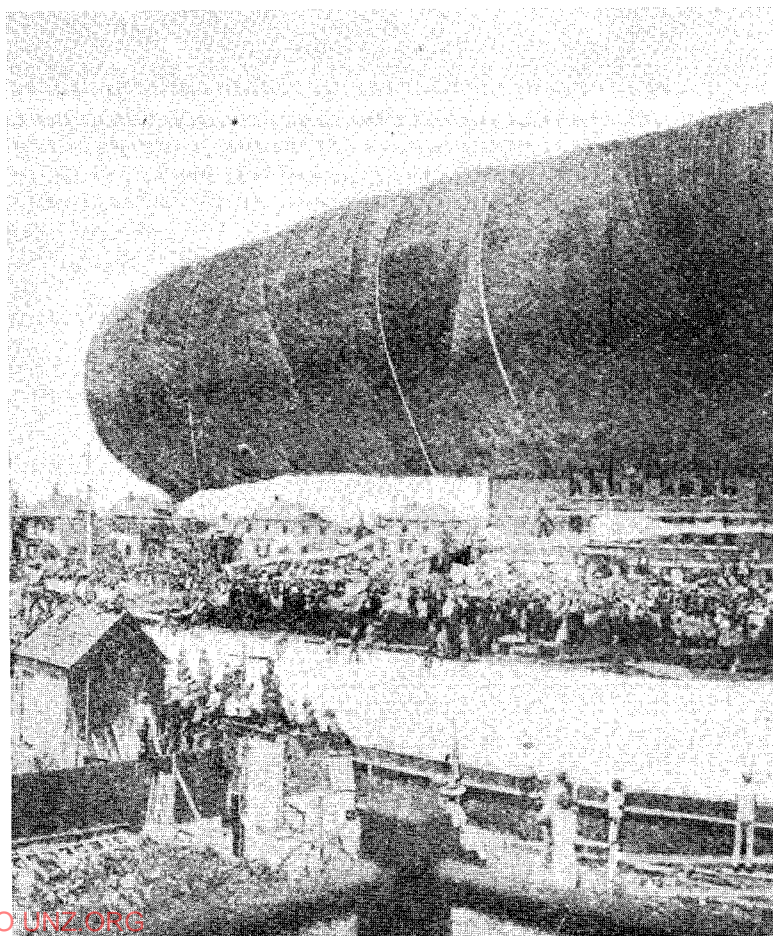
In 1904, Baldwin moved across San Francisco Bay to Idora Park in Oakland where he began building a cigar-shaped airship with several important innovations. Suspended below the 54-foot-long gas balloon was a lightweight aluminum frame that carried the Curtiss motorcycle engine and controls. Because the engine drove a single propeller located at the bow of the frame rather than at the stern, the propeller would pull rather than push the airship and thus give it greater power and maneuverability. Altitude would be changed by simply walking up and down the catwalk of the framework. Significantly, the frame, propeller, and engine of the *California Arrow* weighed only 220 pounds. (Greth's engine alone weighed over 500 pounds.)

Confident in his lightweight design, Baldwin brought the *California Arrow* out of its hangar for its first flight on July 29, 1904. Late in the afternoon, he started the motorcycle engine, and the dirigible lifted off the baseball field of the park. Obtaining an altitude of 500 feet, the aeronaut guided the dirigible over the city and bay, made several turns, and finally returned safely to terra firma and a cheering crowd. Two days later, Baldwin repeated his flight.

Although the flight of the *California Arrow* received little attention in the press, Baldwin had achieved an important American first: he had taken off and landed an airship without mishap. Shortly thereafter, Baldwin left the Bay Area to win several aeronautical prizes at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair. Taking the *California*

*Arrow* on tour, Baldwin made demonstration flights across the country and in the Orient, raced automobiles, and attracted such notoriety that the German Imperial Army finally purchased the airship. Baldwin's exploits incidentally attracted to aviation Roy Knabenshue, who built his own airships and became California's most prominent aeronaut, and Lincoln Beechey, who dabbled in lighter-than-air ships and then became America's greatest pioneer stunt pilot.

In May, 1908, the Bay Area again turned out to witness what was believed would be another significant episode in the history of aviation. Inventor John A. Morrell had traveled from Chicago with the hope of building a fleet of transcontinental airships, and after receiving heavy financial backing from a compliant fiancée, Morrell announced completion of his first





*The expansive Morrell proposed building this huge monster that would measure over a quarter-mile in length. The misguided inventor hoped to compete against the railroads by building a fleet of these airships.*

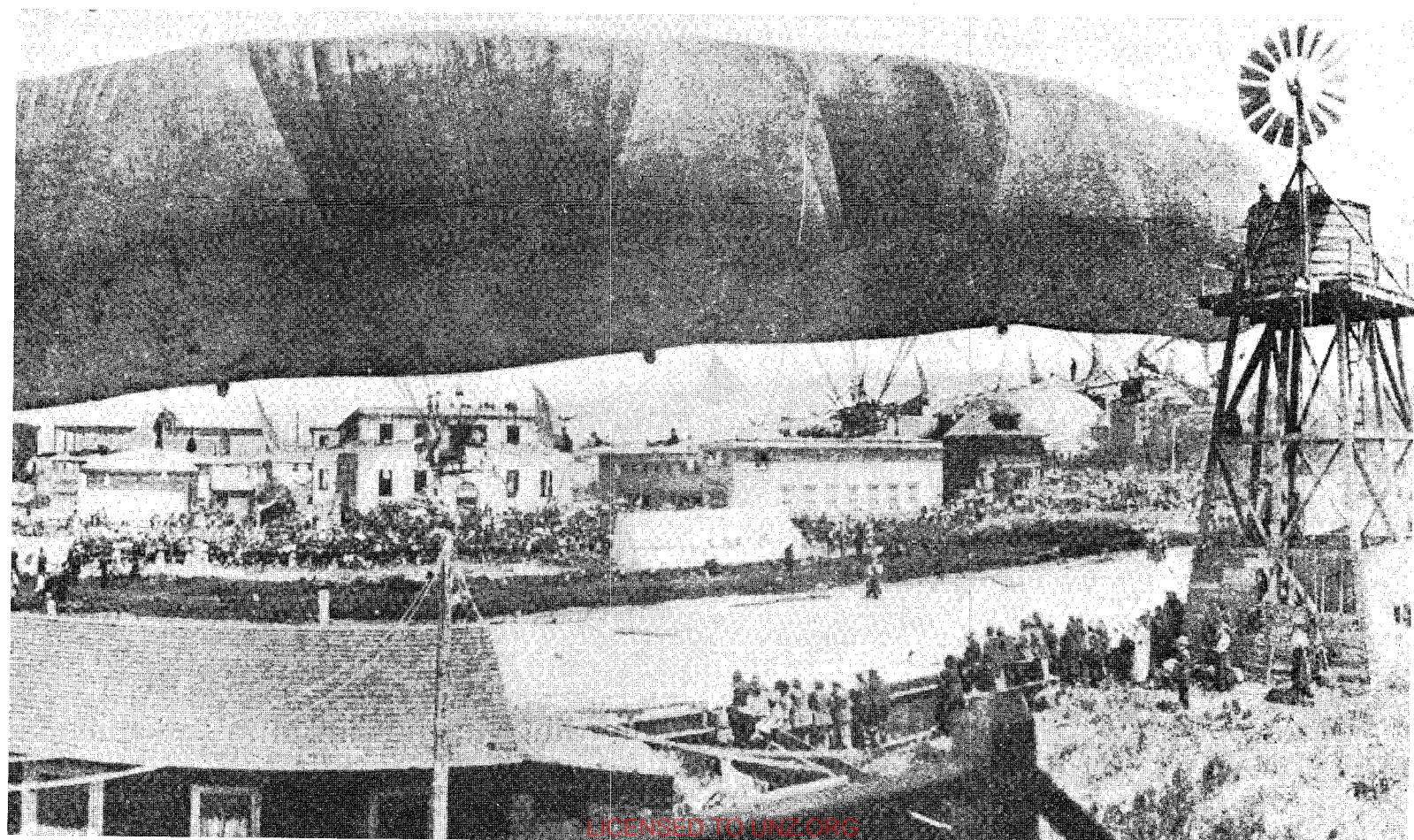
BELOW: Stretching 485 feet in length, the Morrell airship was the largest lighter-than-air vessel built during the early days of aviation. A huge Berkeley throng turned out to watch its fatal flight on May 23, 1908.

## "ARIEL"

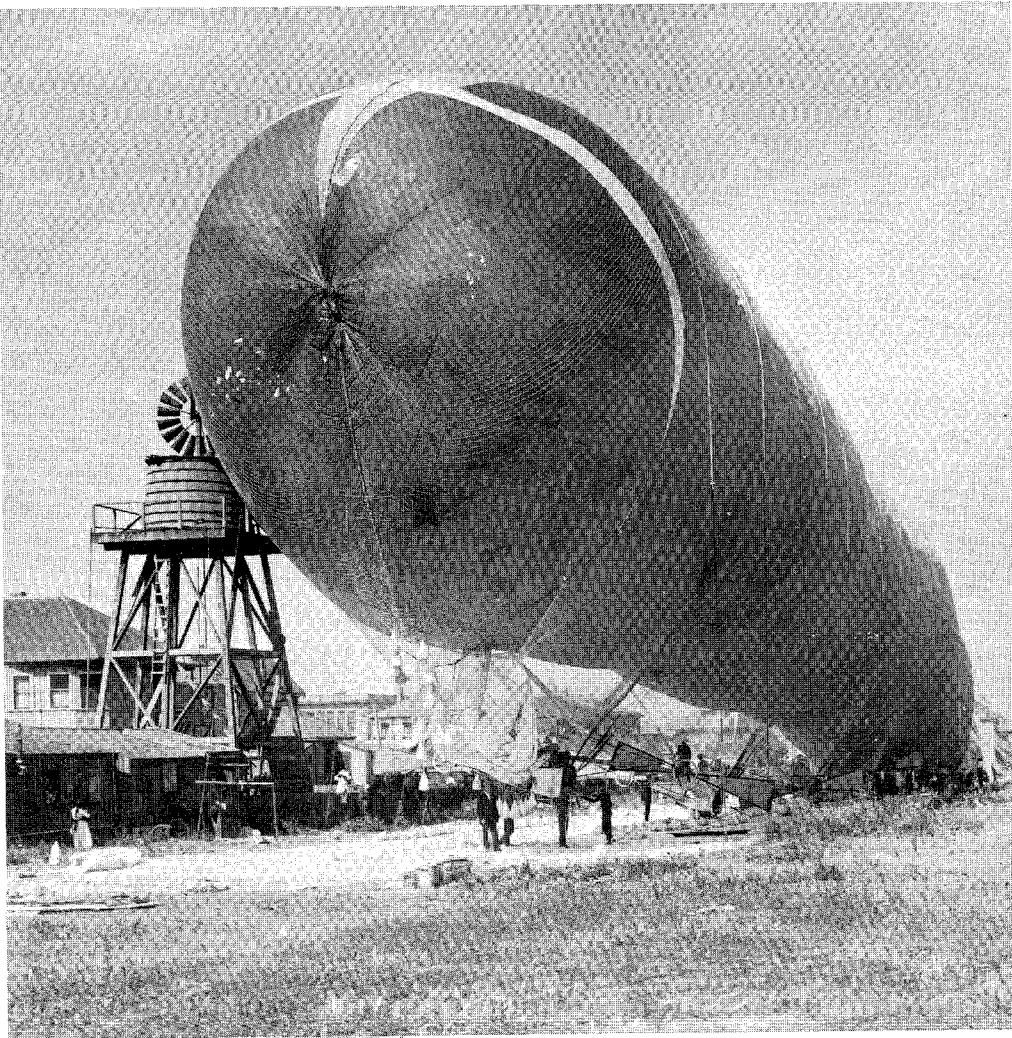


### NATIONAL AIRSHIP COMPANY'S COMMERCIAL AIRSHIP

1250 feet long, 64 feet diameter, 140,000 cubic yards capacity, 128 tons displacement, 8 independent power plants, 3280 actual horse power, 16 propellers. Ships 40 men in the crew, and will carry 500 passengers and 40 tons of mail from New York to London at an expense of \$875.00 in 24 hours (Only as fast as automobiles have traveled.)







*Morrell's airship floated like a giant earthworm over Berkeley before its balloon envelope burst, sending the inventor and crew crashing to the ground. The futility of Morrell's design prompted the following saying: "California has the brightest sunshine, the thickest fogs and the most gigantic frauds of any state in the Union."*

prototype. Before the inventor and his crew could get aboard, however, the airship broke loose from its moorings and drifted helplessly for about twenty miles before crashing near Burlingame. Embarrassed by his runaway dirigible, Morrell then removed himself to Berkeley, where he planned to gain a measure of revenge by building another airship and flying it over San Francisco to upstage the arrival of the Great White Fleet.

Doubtless, Morrell's second airship was one of the most remarkable flying machines ever assembled. Looking like a giant caterpillar, it measured a mammoth 485 feet in length, and its balloon envelope of flimsy muslin held 500,000 cubic feet of illuminating gas. Below this was slung a "mattress" of canvas that held five automobile engines and propellers. The craft had a lifting capacity of ten tons.

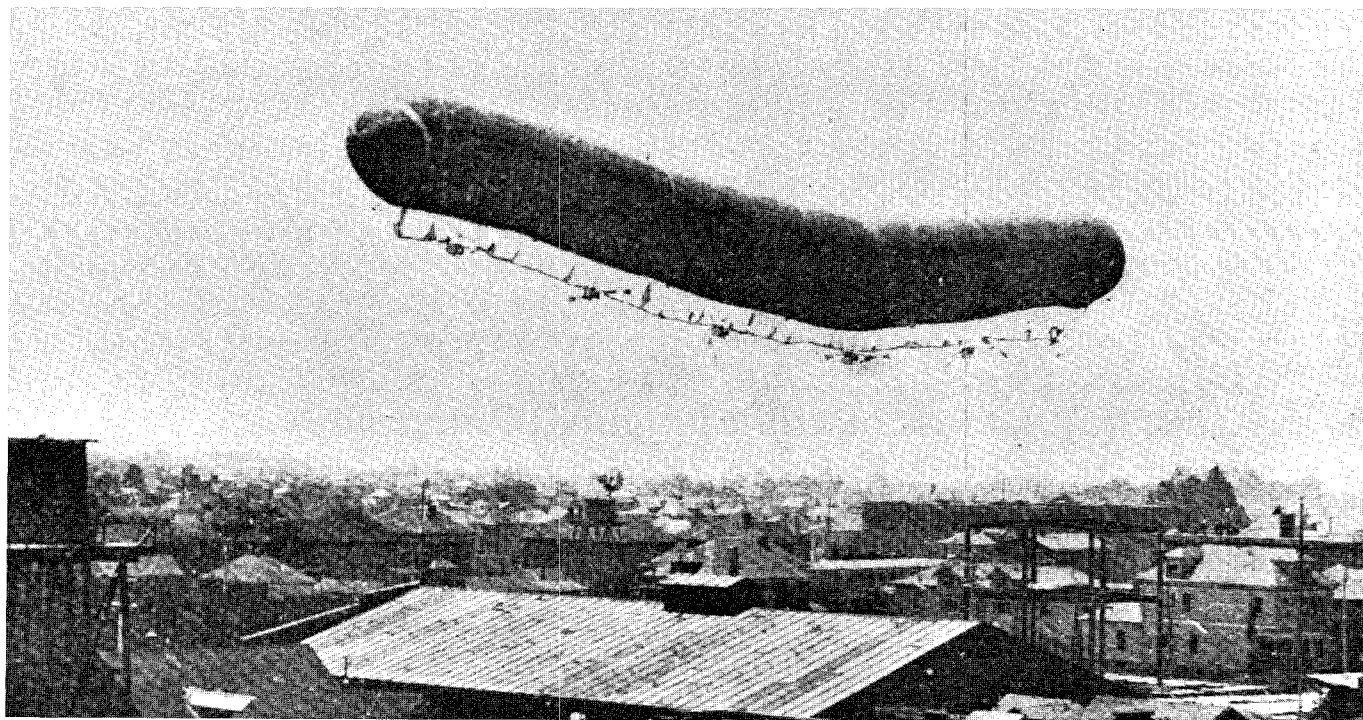
Morrell planned to launch this non-rigid airship in secret to surprise San Francisco, but his plans went awry.

On the morning of May 23, 1908, when his crew began to inflate the balloon on a vacant lot near Berkeley High School, neighbors and passersby, and finally a huge crowd, gathered to behold this engineering monstrosity.

At noon, when preparations were completed, the crew climbed aboard—except George Loose, the man Morrell hired to build the airship. Loose and other observing aeronauts warned Morrell that it was consummately unsafe, but Morrell, pressed by his financial backers, refused to heed their warnings.

So to the accompaniment of a wildly cheering crowd, the giant airship rose to an altitude of about 300 feet. Then disaster hit. Suddenly the dirigible became lopsided, and the mammoth gas bag burst, sending engines, propellers, and men hurtling to the ground on top of the horrified crowd. A reporter for the *Call* reported that "a crew of 16 men, three photographers, and an aeronaut attempted the flight, and of those, nine men, in-





cluding the inventor, were picked up unconscious, their limbs broken.”

Morrell’s foolish attempt to surprise San Francisco and silence his detractors ended as a spectacular debacle. Apparently, the ground crew did not release the guy wires in synchrony and the airship rose lopsided. This caused the gas to rush to one end of the balloon with such great pressure that it burst. Although Morrell’s fiancée also blamed the ground crew, newspaper accounts questioned Morrell’s understanding of aerodynamics and labeled the affair “a monumental blunder from start to finish, an erratic endeavor born from ignorance.”

Undaunted by this fiasco, Morrell once more published plans for an even larger airship measuring over a quarter of a mile in length. According to his company prospectus, the *Ariel* would be a rigid airship with 140,000 cubic yards of gas, 128 tons of displacement, and eight engines generating 3280 horsepower. It also would have the capacity to carry 500 passengers and 40 tons of freight. Perhaps fortunately for all concerned, the *Ariel* never became a reality, and Morrell, like his predecessors, faded into obscurity.

After the Morrell disaster, airship building continued only intermittently in the Bay Area. Most people turned their energies and money to heavier-than-air flying machines that were independent of the unpredictable

and dangerous hydrogen gas balloons. The successes of the Wright Brothers and the biplanes of Glenn Curtiss signaled a new era in aeronautics, and by 1910, the airship had been abandoned as too expensive, slow, and unreliable by San Francisco’s influential Pacific Aero Club. In March, 1910, an article in *Sunset Magazine* entitled “Western Men Who Would Fly” summarized: “The balloon is a known quantity—the aeroplane is a fascinating uncertainty—the balloon is an economic failure for air-travel—the aeroplane is a partial success.”

The advent of the airplane, however, did not totally eclipse the accomplishments of Marriott, Greth, Baldwin, and others. Their experiments contributed to the development of the huge airships that became popular in the 1920s and ’30s and the modern blimps that entertain us every New Years Day. In fact, today’s energy shortages and aviation fuel costs have prompted some transportation experts once again to advocate developing new lighter-than-air vehicles to meet future transportation needs.

The illustration on page 345 is courtesy the Society of California Pioneers, as is the drawing on page 334, which is reproduced from the *San Francisco Call*, September 1, 1896. The photograph on page 347 is courtesy the Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino. The illustrations on pages 341, 345 bottom, and 346 are from *Scientific American* magazine and are in the CHS Library with all the other illustrations.



# Pages from the Past—



## CROSSING THE SIERRAS.

### NORWEGIAN SNOW SKATES.

The recent rapid settlement of that great belt of fertile valleys lying along the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada range of California, has made necessary the extension of mail facilities to that inland world in advance of any provision for that purpose by the agents of the general government. Previous to the winter of 1854-5 the inhabitants of these valleys for three or four months of the year, were closed in by almost inaccessible snow-clad mountains on the west, and on the east by a vast extent of desert country stretching towards Salt Lake, that during the winter months seems peculiarly the

great battle ground of the winds and the storm.

The great depth of the snows upon the Sierras, renders their passage by pack animals not only difficult but dangerous, and often for months together wholly impracticable. To remedy this great inconvenience and secure to the people of the valleys a regular correspondence with California west of the mountains, a proposition was made by Mr. John A. Thompson, a Norwegian by birth, to convey the mails semi-monthly without regard to the depth of the snow. The proposition was accepted and we here present him mounted upon the true Norwegian snow skates, of which, a knowledge of their construction and use he had retained

from the memory of boyhood, having left his native land at the age of ten years.

Entirely unlike the snow shoes of the North American Indian or the people of the Canadas, well adapted as they are to a loose light snow and a level country, the snow skates are peculiarly adapted to the rugged features of our mountains and the damp compact snows that annually accumulate upon them.

The skate consists of a single piece of strong stiff wood, from six to seven and a half feet in length, that turning up in front six or eight inches terminates in a point, six inches in width on the bottom at the bend and gradually tapering backwards to four inches in width. It is flat on the bottom, the top oval or rounded except about a foot in length where the foot rests, a little back of the center; here it is an inch and a half in thickness, from thence tapering to a half an inch or less at either end.

The only fastening is a single strap over the toe of the boot admitting of the freest possible motion to the feet and ankles. In making progress the skate is only raised from the snow when it is desired to make a shorter turn than would otherwise be possible. On uphill or level surfaces the skates are placed parallel to each other and pushed forward alternately with ease about the length of an ordinary step, but the impetus given causes them to slide further than this, while upon descending surfaces they run with great ease and rapidity, and when the declivity is very great, making it necessary to check the motion by throwing the weight of the skater upon a double

handed staff, six feet in length, forced into the snow upon one side as showed in the cut. With these skates Mr. Thompson, heavily laden, travels over the otherwise almost inaccessible snow clad cliffs, and gorges of the Sierras, a distance of from thirty to forty miles a day, thus bearing the sealed tidings, doubtless of hope or disappointment, happiness or grief to many.

It is a feature of our inland transit unique in itself, and as far as it relates to the American Continent, we believe peculiarly Californian.

As showing to some extent the perils and dangers incident to a winter passage of the Sierra Nevada, we subjoin the following interesting account from the *Sac. Union*.

J. A. Thompson, the Expressman of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, called upon us yesterday, upon the completion of his second trip this winter to Carson Valley, and placed us in possession of some highly interesting particulars connected therewith. This trip is peculiarly interesting, from the fact that it was made on his Norwegian snow shoes, seven and a half feet long, over snow which, at some points, he was unable to fathom.

About three miles above Placerville, he came to the snow, having left that place on the 20th of December. He was accompanied by two men who had awaited his going, and at this point they all put on their snow shoes. The weather was clear, but cold, and the party made Lake Valley without any incident worthy of note.

On the night of the 23d December, they reached a deserted cabin in that valley, and struck a fire. Mr. Thompson being anxious to press on, told his companions that he would go ahead and stay over night at another cabin about a mile ahead, and that they could overtake him in the morning. Al-

## Crossing the Sierras—Norwegian Snow Skates



though anxious to stop, rather than separate from him, they determined to go on that night, and once more they all started off. About midnight, they reached the cabin and found everything dark and the door closed. Mr. Thompson, not expecting to find any one in, however, knocked and "halloed," when, to his surprise, a voice answered from within. On entering, Mr. Thompson found a man lying alone upon the floor in that dreary spot, without other covering than the clothes he wore, and the boots frozen to his feet.

In this deplorable condition, he had been lying for twelve days, with nothing to sustain life but raw flour. His feet were completely frozen, and will both have to be amputated below the knee. His sufferings must, according to the statement of Mr. Thompson, have been indescribable, and yet he bore them with the fortitude of a martyr, and scarcely permitted a murmur to escape him. Although death would soon have terminated his agony, he still had a lingering hope that Providence might direct Mr. Thompson by his cabin, and thus save him. Had not Mr. T. gone on that night, he would probably have passed the cabin in the morning without stopping.

The sufferer proved to be James Sisson, the partner of Mr. Hawley, about six miles above Placerville. He had been engaged in the packing business, and left for Carson Valley on snow shoes some two weeks previous. The storm overtook him on his way, and his feet becoming frozen, it was with great difficulty he reached his cabin or trading post. On arriving there he found his matches so wet that he could not strike a light, and thus he remained for four days, when he discovered a box of matches in his cabin which furnished him a fire. He then attempted to cut his boots off his feet, but could not succeed; and nothing remained for him but to await either succor or death.

On the 24th, Mr. Thompson started

for Carson Valley, and on Christmas day got five men to agree to accompany him back to Lake Valley. He rigged them out with snow shoes, made after the pattern of his own, and taking with them a sled upon which to haul the sufferer, they started back on the 26th. They reached the trading post that night, and laid over during the 27th, in consequence of the severe weather—another snow being falling. On the 28th, they packed Mr. Sisson on the sled, and thus, with great labor, succeeded in conveying him safely to Carson Valley, where the sufferer is now lying in the care of Dr. Dagget. Mr. Thompson, on his return will take with him some chloroform which will be administered to the patient and his feet amputated, as it was not deemed advisable to attempt the operation without this agency.

In Carson Valley, Mr. Thompson fell in with Col. Wm. Rogers, who had gone over from Hope Valley, and from him he learned that one of his copper miners, named Benj. Fenwick, formerly from Virginia, had been frozen to death on the 15th of December. The deceased had gone to Carson Valley, and was returning home, when the cold overpowered him, at a distance of three hundred yards from Col. Rogers' house. He seated himself upon the snow, with his body in an upright position, and thus perished. Five days after, a dog which had accompanied him approached the house, emaciated and starved. The occupants of the house, following the track of the dog, which faithful animal also followed them back, found the body of Fenwick as described. From the indications, it was manifest the dog had not left the body of his master during that time, but had crouched upon his lap, until driven away by starvation or a higher instinct. That the devoted animal should have escaped freezing is somewhat remarkable.

Mr. Thompson left Carson Valley on Monday, January 5th, and arrived in this city yesterday morning, the 9th.

At Big Canon, the snow was four feet deep; at Hope Valley, five feet; at Luthers' Pass, six feet; at Lake Valley, five feet; and in the pass on Johnson's Summit, he sounded a depth of ten feet without reaching bottom. He estimates the depth of snow for eight miles this side of Slippery Ford at twelve feet.

### "STRIKE THE HARP GENTLY."

BY CALVIN E. McDONALD.

[Every Californian who has listened to the sweet musical strains of the lamented Mrs. Robb, will read the following beautiful sentiment from the pen of C. B. McDonald, formerly of the *Sierra Citizen*, with feelings of sorrowful regret, that one so fair and gifted, should be prematurely hushed in the deep stillness of the tomb, or be called from their care easing mission in our mountain land, to the spirit world above.—Ed.]

We have received a message, dictated by the late MIRIAM GOODENOW ROBB a little while before the gates of Paradise were lifted up, at the coming of one of the fairest and purest of those whom God created only a little lower than the angels. Her request was, that Gen. Allen and the writer of this would not forget that she had lived—that they would collect and send to her little daughter, all their articles written about herself; that when ELLA shall have learned to read, she may honor the name of her lost mother, and be taught to believe that, after all, this world is not so very dreary; because, in the far-off sunset land, among the nodding firs and bleak and silent crags of California, many a stout heart, calloused with the curse of gold, welled up like a fountain in the desert, when the sweet voice of her mother bade the bearded miner "strike the harp gently."

Strange it is that when the Angel of Death is sent to earth, to execute the

decree of "dust to dust," that the young and beautiful perish, while the old and the deformed, and the heavy laden are left to toil on with their weary burdens. But, 'tis even so; the archer sends his shaft at the soaring eagle, and spares the partridge cowering under the hedge; and when the lightning crowns the mountain brow with fire, the ignobler trees escape its vengeance, but the lofty pine, that lifts its head heavenward, and nods to its Creator, is blasted, and its branches withered, leaving only the riven trunk, swaying to and fro, writing on the overhanging dome, in characters unread by mortal eye, "Thy will be done." When the "demons down under the sea," come up and war among the waves, the worthless hulk is washed ashore, but the noble ship, that bears the proudest pennant of the world, goes down, full of life and majesty.

And when the flower girl goes forth to gather the first born of the spring time, the lily, bending with the purest distillations of night, is gathered first.

Rest thee, sweet singer! Rest thee beneath the green prairies of Illinois; and every evening, when the chaste sunlight draws its last magic circle around thy sleeping place, "strike the harp gently."

And the little Ella! In after years, when the glow of womanhood shall have mantled her cheek; when the stranger's kiss, pressed on her infant brow, shall have grown cold and been forgotten; when the chaste summer wind sweeps up from Lake Michigan, and plays among the branches of the locust and the willow, in God's Acre; when

"The young lambs are playing in the meadows,  
The young birds are chirping in the nest;  
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,  
And the young flowers are blowing toward the west."

let ELLA, kneeling by the honored grave of Genius, whisper softly to the overwatching angel, "MOTHER, STRIKE



# THE ECONOMIST AS HUMANIST

## – the career of Paul S. Taylor –

Sitting in his modest, cluttered campus office with his door ajar to welcome the steady stream of visitors, Professor Paul S. Taylor handles the multitude of details which demand his attention. At eighty-four years of age, although retired from the University of California at Berkeley and suffering health problems, Taylor works six hours a day, five days a week. Alert, warm, and eloquent, he lights up at a humorous anecdote; his laconic wit remains as dry as a breeze off the San Joaquin Valley.

Since 1943 Taylor has been in the center of the movement to preserve national land and water policy in the West. Long before it became fashionable, he studied minorities and delved into the dramatic, often bloody history of farm labor in California. His advanced students include a former secretary of labor, a former president of the university system, several legislators, hundreds of teachers, and an estimated 20,000 students who took his classes during his forty-year career at the university. His pervasive influence is evidenced in the scores of Ph.D. and M.A. theses which bear his signature as a reader or supervisor. His thirty-year marriage to photographer Dorothea Lange produced not only a partnership which lasted until Lange's death in 1965,

Richard Steven Street won the 1978 James D. Phelan award for his account of the emergence of California agriculture. He is presently completing a history of California farm workers between 1769 and 1979—a work based on over 500 manuscript collections ranging from the Mission Archives and the papers of Cesar Chavez to material in the Bank of America Archives and declassified F.B.I. files. He lives in his home town, San Anselmo, and writes for *Pacific Sun*.

but also a brilliant collaborative record of the 1930s, *An American Exodus*.

Taylor's professionalism, however, has never diverted him from his primary concern—the quality of human life. Trained as an economist, he broke through the artificial barriers separating history from economics and synthesized the two in his own investigations. A pioneer in the field of oral history, he developed interviewing techniques and a methodology long before the approach became an accepted form of historical enquiry. He also diligently collected historical information, and the small mountain of material which he has deposited in the Bancroft Library testifies not only to his ongoing research but also to his deep commitment to preserving information for future generations.

Born in Sioux City, Iowa, in 1895, Paul Taylor was raised by loving parents of English-German-Swiss lineage. In 1913 he entered the University of Wisconsin, at Madison, an experience which he later recalled “gave the bent to my whole life.” Madison offered a stimulating intellectual environment, and Taylor was strongly attracted to the school's controversial and challenging economists—Richard T. Ely, E. A. Ross, and John R. Commons. Finding these men appealingly broad-minded rather than narrowly academic and drawn to their view of economics as a flexible field of study embracing history, law, sociology, and political science, Taylor was particularly impressed by their belief that knowledge could be a tool for solving contemporary social problems. Studying with these men, Taylor found economics to be a lively discipline rather than the pro-



*Teaching labor economics at the University of California, Taylor combined teaching and research with extensive field work.*

verbial “dismal science.” Above all he was stimulated by concepts identified with Commons and his associates: that political, historical, and social circumstances determine economic reality, that the economist must reject arbitrary academic disciplines and work from real conditions rather than theorizing from books, that facts so discovered suggest courses of action, and that ethical decisions are the essence of the discipline.<sup>1</sup>

In 1917 Taylor left the University of Wisconsin with a degree in labor economics. He had become a confirmed advocate of the John R. Commons critique of the classical school of labor economics, especially its deductive method, its pretensions to final truth, and its belief in the abstract “economic man.” But Taylor’s education had only just begun.

On the basis of a single military science course consisting of a weekly close-order drill, Taylor obtained a commission in the Marine Corps. On February 4, 1918, he arrived in France. Several months later he found himself a lieutenant and a platoon leader in the trenches of Verdun. Soon thereafter, he was caught in a gas barrage at Belleau Wood where his lungs were severely damaged.

Returning to the United States to recover, Taylor spoke with the economist E. A. Ross about his future career. Ross counseled him against becoming a lawyer and helped him obtain a modest scholarship in economics from Columbia University. A family friend and physician, however, advised Taylor that his lungs could not stand the rigors of a winter in New York City, and accordingly, the young veteran faced about and headed west to the University of California at Berkeley for a year of recuperation and graduate study.

At Berkeley, Taylor found much more than he had expected. While the salubrious California climate slowly restored his health, Taylor discovered that the university, although still considered an academic backwater, had become an exciting crossroads of ideas. Students gathered there from around the world—many of them,



like Taylor, older, war-toughened, bright, mature. The infant Economics Department boasted several outstanding teachers, including Stuart Daggett, who was pioneering in his studies of the Southern Pacific Railway, and Ira B. Cross, a Commons student who had initiated important work on the early California labor movement. Taylor also worked closely with the university’s two preeminent historians, Herbert E. Bolton and Herbert Priestley. Soon Taylor abandoned his plan to study at Columbia University. Working with Solomon Blum, the chairman of the Economics Department, Taylor wrote his doctoral dissertation in 1922 on the west coast seaman’s union. After Blum died in 1926, Taylor, who had been teaching his mentor’s classes during his long illness, was asked to continue teaching as an instructor in the Economics Department.<sup>2</sup>

Teaching absorbed most of Taylor's energies during his first years. But then he began thinking about research and writing. Interested in exploring California farm labor problems in the same way that Commons had explored trade unions and collective bargaining, Taylor began seeking sources of financial support. During a faculty dinner honoring Edith Abbott of the University of Chicago School of Welfare, Taylor got his big break. Carl Plehn, chairman of Chicago's Economics Department, slipped Taylor a card reading "See me after dinner." Later Plehn introduced him to Abbott, who was then director of the Social Science Research Council's Committee on Human Migration. Abbott was looking for someone to study Mexican immigration to the United States, a phenomenon reaching flood-tide proportions, and she asked if Taylor would undertake such a study. Taylor answered instantly, "Yes!" Within a few weeks he was off on a six-month leave from his teaching duties. Little did he realize in January 1927, that he was embarking on a life-long venture.<sup>3</sup>

Taylor quickly discovered that research on Mexican immigration could not be gathered in any library because the little existing data was extremely biased. Therefore, he decided to talk to the immigrants themselves. Asking people "Where are the Mexicans?" he was told that they picked grapes around Napa. When he arrived there, however, it was February, the wrong season.

Next, Taylor drove into the Central Valley. Armed with notebooks and a Kodak camera, he crisscrossed the dusty backroads until he found some Mexican "Colonias" around Madera and Merced. After some preliminary notetaking, he continued south until he reached the Imperial Valley. There he visited pool halls, movie houses, schools, barber shops, labor agencies, counseling offices, labor camps, and cafes. It was not easy work. Taylor recalls: "You walk up to somebody

whom you've never seen, you don't know who he is, you don't know what his background is—all that you can see is his face and clothing and where he is. You walk up to him and what do you say?" Taylor discovered that the best approach was to begin with questions about crops, or weather, or directions. After a friendly response, he would move to questions about wages and the background of the people he was interviewing. When people asked why Taylor was so curious, he would say simply that he was a school teacher. Slowly pulling out his notebook, Taylor would then ask, "Do you mind if I put this down? I have trouble remembering." Invariably his interviewees would reply, "Oh, no, no. Go ahead." What Taylor could not record in notes, he would log as soon as possible, frequently pulling his 1924 Dodge off the road under a shady tree to reconstruct the interview. Returning to Berkeley after months in the field, he dictated his notes for transcription by Elizabeth Priestley, daughter of Professor Priestley.

Taylor worked on this project from 1927 to 1930. Besides the Imperial Valley, Los Angeles, and Orange County, he concentrated on five other areas where Mexican labor was important: the valley of the South Platte in Colorado; Dimmit and Nueces counties in Texas; the Calumet region of Indiana and Illinois; and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. In addition, he solicited immense amounts of data from hundreds of people and institutions scattered across the United States.<sup>4</sup>

Unsatisfied with his statistics on Mexican patterns within California, Taylor nevertheless felt that he would have to attempt a rough quantitative assessment. Aware that most Mexican migrants passed through the Tehachapi Mountains following the ripening crops north or returning home for the winter, he arranged with the Standard Oil Company to have its service station attendant at Gorman, high in the Tehachapis, tabulate the number of Mexican farm workers chugging up over the ridge in their old flivvers. Thus he obtained a rough



idea of the directions and quantitative dimensions of the migration.

Another problem confronting the young researcher was his formal academic training. Neither French nor German—the two languages required for the doctoral degree—proved helpful in interviewing Mexican farm workers. At first he circumvented the problem by using an interpreter. Subsequently, he solved the problem by auditing undergraduate Spanish classes and studying with a tutor.<sup>5</sup>

As Taylor immersed himself in the Spanish language and Mexican culture, he began to realize that the Commons approach to labor economics was limited in its ability to comprehend farm labor problems because of its preoccupation with trade unionism and its ethnocentric assumptions. In delving into the Mexican-American sub-culture, particularly its tension with the dominant Anglo culture, Taylor realized, for instance, that farmworkers demonstrated different attitudes toward basic pursuits such as work and that a concept such as the Protestant Ethic was culture-bound.

Interviewing people of every social and economic class on a wide range of questions, Taylor sought out village Indians, urban Mexicans, illegals, young children, businessmen, and old people. Out of this data, he carved thirteen monographs in the series *Mexican Labor in the United States*. All but one were published by the University of California. The first, *Imperial Valley*, appeared in 1928. The last, *Nueces County, Texas*, was issued in 1934 by the University of North Carolina Press. Two monographs, "Women in Los Angeles Industries" and "Orange County, California," remain in manuscript form along with hundreds of Taylor's interviews, field notes, scholarly papers, newspaper clippings, photographs and ephemeral material in the Bancroft Library.<sup>6</sup>

The *Mexican Labor* monographs firmly established Taylor's reputation as a scholar. In contrast to most writing about Mexicans in this period, Taylor's series

was sensitive, probing, and well-researched, matched only by the work of Manuel Gamio, a contemporary Mexican anthropologist. All thirteen of Taylor's volumes have been reprinted.

"El Enganchado"  
("The Hooked One")

*I came under contract from Morelia  
To earn dollars was my dream.  
I bought shoes and I bought a hat  
And even put on trousers.  
For they told me that here the dollars  
Were scattered about in heaps  
That there were girls and theaters  
And that here everything was fun.  
And so I'm overwhelmed—  
I am a shoemaker by trade  
But here they say I'm a camel  
And good only for pick and shovel.  
What good is it to know my trade  
If there are manufacturers by the score  
And while I make two little shoes  
They turn out more than a million.  
Many Mexicans don't care to speak  
The language their mothers taught them  
And go about saying they are Spanish  
And denying their country's flag. . . .  
My kids speak perfect English  
And have no use for our Spanish.  
They call me "fadder" and don't work  
And are crazy about the Charleston.  
I am tired of all this nonsense  
I'm going back to Michoacan . . . .*

Song from interview by Paul Taylor, in  
*Mexican Labor in the United States:  
Chicago and the Calumet Region*  
(Berkeley, 1932).

When Taylor returned to full-time teaching at Berkeley in 1930, he was inundated by requests for information, advice, and consultation. Expertise and public involvement, however, did not earn Taylor more money. During his long absences from the university, Taylor had been repeatedly denied salary advancement, and some faculty members hinted that Taylor would be wise to follow more traditional research lines. Taylor bore the financial consequences stoically, however, setting a record for serving nine years without advancement as an associate professor in the Economics Department at Berkeley.<sup>7</sup>

As Taylor resumed his teaching duties in the early thirties, he saw the nation plunge into the greatest economic depression in its history, one he knew would hit the unskilled harvest workers of the great Central Valley particularly hard. In October, 1933, after nearly 8,000 migrant workers went on strike in the southern San Joaquin Valley, the California Department of Industrial Relations requested that Taylor investigate the violent strike in the cotton fields and compile a history of the event. His efforts produced a model documentary history and a landmark in the story of California's farm laborers.

Taylor introduced the study with these thoughts:

As the faulting of the earth exposes its strata and reveals its structure, so a social disturbance throws into bold relief the structure of society, the attitudes, reactions, and interests of its groups. . . . It exhibits in full detail the essential characteristics of numerous lesser conflicts in California agriculture, both before and since, in which ardent organizers agitate and lead, incensed "vigilantes" organize and act, growers, officials and laborers each overstep the law, and citizens finally cry to the state authorities for peace, if necessary at the hands of troops.<sup>8</sup>

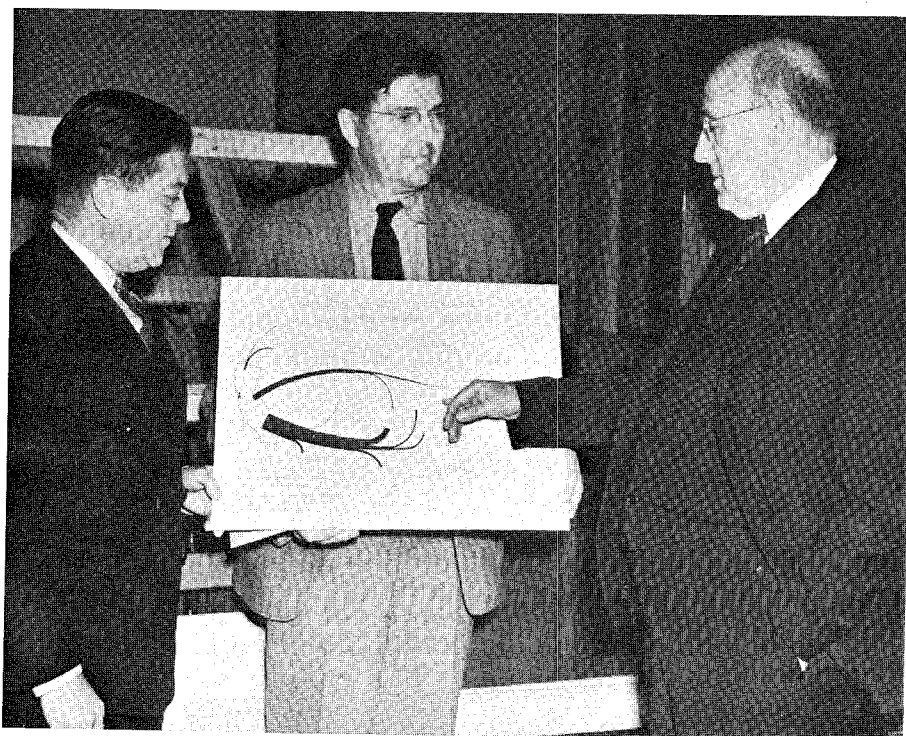
In the pages which followed, he edited verbatim statements from every available source and reconstructed the entire story of the strike, demonstrating how the event was like a prism which refracted virtually everything that was happening in rural California at that time. Sub-

sequently printed by the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee, the document did much to dispel unfounded accusations that the strike was solely the result of communist agitation, as many newspapers had reported. Rather, Taylor showed that the strike was the natural outgrowth of the legitimate grievances of desperate people who ran headlong into equally desperate and unbudging farmers.<sup>9</sup>

The following year Taylor was offered a job as field research director for the Rural Rehabilitation Division of the California State Relief Administration. Believing that this agency's work offered a possible solution to problems created by the depression, Taylor accepted the position unhesitatingly. "In carrying out this new research assignment to design a government program," he recalls, "I found I must also take a step beyond what I had taken previously when studying Mexican migrants under traditional academic auspices. I wanted to produce reports that would bring action as well as information." To accomplish this, Taylor assembled a modest staff, hired a photographer whose position was concealed on the payroll as a typist, and moved into the countryside.

Most appalling, Taylor and his staff determined, were the migrants' living conditions. Laborers were forced to live in camps where homes were built of strips of tarpaper, gunny sacks, corrugated iron, cement sacks, and fruit packing crates. Describing this situation to the State Relief Administration in late 1935, Taylor called on the federal government to "accord minimum deficiencies to the workers and access to health and other public agencies." Soon thereafter the Relief Administration allocated its first \$200,000 to initiate a program of federal housing for rural migrants, with the first camp dedicated on October 5, 1935, at Marysville. Eventually the Farm Security Administration, which administered the program, constructed a dozen other camps throughout the United States.<sup>10</sup> Paul Taylor may be considered the father of this camp program, which exemplifies the major thrust of his career during the 1930s—his linking





*In 1939, Taylor presented his data about the movements of migrant workers to Senators Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin (left) and Elbert D. Thomas of Utah (right) of the subcommittee meeting in San Francisco to investigate industrialized farming.*

of social science with public policy. Not surprisingly, this creative synthesis continued to lead him in new and fruitful directions.<sup>11</sup>

Late in 1934, while attending a photo exhibit at Willard Van Dyke's studio in Oakland, Taylor met the young photographer Dorothea Lange. Married since 1920 to the painter Maynard Dixon, she had begun her career as a portrait photographer but moved in the 1930s into documentary work. One of her first "street" photographs, "White-Angel Breadline, San Francisco, 1932," portrayed an unshaven man leaning on a railing, hands clenched around a tin cup, with his back turned to a line of people waiting for food. After viewing this powerful image, Taylor asked to use Lange's work to illustrate his own writing. In September, 1934, he selected her photograph of a radical orator as the frontispiece for an article on the San Francisco General Strike.

Early in 1935, the two began collaborating on the study for the California State Relief Administration which produced the migrant camp program. As they worked together they discovered each other's keen intellect, refined temperament, didactic moral sense, and liberal political views. They appreciated, too, that neither could separate their personal values from their work and that their work showed the need for strong action, much as a medical diagnosis was followed by treatment.

Taylor and Lange began to consider marriage—in the romantic sense and in the sense of integrating their careers in social science and photography. Both divorced late in 1935, and on December 6, 1935, they were married in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Shortly thereafter they rented a house in Berkeley, where Dorothea installed her darkroom.<sup>12</sup>

Taylor and Lange made more than a traditional marriage,<sup>13</sup> and in 1939 they demonstrated their pathbreaking kind of teamwork. Responding to the migration of hundreds of thousands of America's dispossessed, they recorded the hegira in words and pictures in *An American Exodus*. Published by a small press, *An American Exodus* received little national attention, but like everything else the pair did, it became a classic work of art and history, a collector's delight, and a photographic landmark.<sup>14</sup>

As he worked with Dorothea and with both the Relief Administration and the university, Taylor also became deeply involved in the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee's probe of industrial agriculture in California. In January, 1938, he overwhelmed the committee by presenting the results of his years of field work, particularly with his information that over 150 strikes had been waged in rural California since 1930. Coming at the moment in the committee's work when Senator

Hiram Johnson had squeezed off funds for this investigation and when local sheriffs and growers had accordingly refused to turn over subpoenaed evidence and ignored summonses to preliminary hearings, Taylor's studies, statistics, graphs, and visual data gave the committee enough information to initiate its probe. At the same time, the publication of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* and Carey McWilliam's *Factories in the Field* created further pressure for an investigation. As a result, the committee obtained funds to open hearings in December, 1939, in a packed San Francisco courtroom.

Amid red-baiting accusations, Paul Taylor took the witness stand and showed how the amount of farm labor strife in California was far out of proportion to that occurring in other rural areas. In vivid language he told how "Okies" had been "burned-out, plowed-out, tractored-out." Then he asked the crucial question: "Can a large farm labor class be reconciled with democracy?" Pointing out how farm workers "bear increasingly the mark of a class as chances of ascending the agricultural ladder, or of finding outlets into industry, grow more difficult," he described the destruction of small-scale family farming and the growth of finance agriculture, the relationship between large-scale farming and undemocratic principles and traditions, and the close alliance between urban and rural anti-labor employer associations. To rectify these problems, he called for workman's compensation, old-age insurance, social security, a minimum wage, and protection of the farm worker's right to organize—privileges already accorded other workers.

The shock of being subpoenaed and being forced to answer questions from the likes of Paul Taylor angered many growers, rural leaders, and sheriffs, who fought the committee bitterly. But for eight days the LaFollette Committee uncovered tales of riots, tear gas bombings, shootings, beatings, arrests, and murders. From the testimony of 395 witnesses, as well as 1747 exhibits and

5875 miscellaneous pieces of information, the committee then published an exhaustive dissection of California agriculture, particularly the efforts of the Associated Farmers Inc. to crush farmworker's organizations and the mounting abuses of civil liberties in rural areas during the 1930s. The result of this examination, the historian Irving Bernstein observed, was "like lifting the lid of a garbage pail."<sup>15</sup>

The LaFollette Committee hearings and the events of the 1930s unsettled Paul Taylor's life. Fifteen years of research, writing, thinking, observing, and teaching had led him to agree substantially with Henry George's assertion that California agriculture contained "the same tendencies to concentration which the power loom and the trip hammer had developed in manufacturing." Farming was becoming more expensive, complex, and exclusive; the land, supposedly a haven for the poor and disinherited, seemed to be becoming the property of the rich and of the corporations—the "big guys," Taylor would often say. Like Jeffersonians before him, Taylor saw the nation's democratic potential and tradition declining with the end of the small family farm.

Convinced that these anti-democratic tendencies grew out of the nation's pattern of land use, especially its inequitable distribution, Taylor set forth his ideas in two famous essays published in *Rural Sociology*. Documenting that in 1860, some 37 percent of California's farm population was composed of nomadic harvesters, whereas by 1929 nearly 60 percent made its living picking crops, Taylor demonstrated how the growth of commercial fruit and vegetable farming had generated a "semi-industrialized rural proletariat."<sup>16</sup>

For Taylor, the plight of the rural poor and the undemocratic tendencies of commercial agriculture were



more than academic interests. The social effects of corporate agriculture, he believed, could not be justified by principles of law, business, efficiency, or productivity, and his career from 1940 to the present has been shaped by these concerns.<sup>17</sup>

In his research, Taylor has focused particularly on the Reclamation Act of 1902, a law written to benefit landless poor people and to further small-scale family farming, but which has had an opposite effect because it has seldom been enforced. Delving into the history of the law, Taylor discovered that the Reclamation Service was set up to be responsible for building dams and canals in seventeen western states and that the land "reclaimed" by water from these projects was restricted to 160 acres per person. Since 1912, however, Taylor believes, the Interior Department has been a puppet for large landed interests supposedly excluded temporarily from the benefits of the law. Moreover, on the eve of World War I, department administrators set aside the requirement that farmers live on the reclaimed land. As a result, big farm operators were able to grab even more cheap public water, and in 1926, when these same big operators forced the Interior Department to drop the residency and acreage requirements entirely, absentee landowners were able to develop large farms on land intended for small-scale family farming.<sup>18</sup>

In many essays published in a wide variety of journals and periodicals, Taylor has thought and rethought these ideas, putting them in popular forms and telling them to countless audiences as diverse as university faculties and members of the Commonwealth Club. Presenting his ideas clearly and forcefully, Taylor always boils down the issues to this simple choice: Are the few or the many to benefit, the people for whom the law was intended or those the law had clearly excluded?<sup>19</sup>

Taylor's lonely fight has often kept him at odds with the University of California. Indeed, during Taylor's tenure, he has watched the institution train agricultural

engineers, build harvest machines, invent superior hybrid plants, systemize farming operations, and create an entrenched echelon of people who function to nullify his work. Yet at the same time the university has valued and protected Taylor as a scholar apart, allowing him to educate and conduct research on and off campus.<sup>20</sup>

As a member of the Economics Department at Berkeley, Paul Taylor continually fought the compartmentalization of faculty and disciplines by advising graduate candidates in history, sociology, political science, and anthropology, as well as economics. Chairman of the Economics Department from 1952 to 1956, he helped guide the newly created Institute of Industrial Relations. In addition, Taylor served as advisor to the Interior Department, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Social Security Board, and the President's Commission on Migratory Labor.

As a teacher, Taylor has always been concerned for and committed to his students. He combines criticism with praise to insure quality work and inspire his students to ongoing excellence. Through students who went on to distinguished careers in government and the universities, Taylor has exercised considerable influence. Clark Kerr, whom Taylor took to the 1933 cotton picker's strike, became president of the University of California. Referring to Kerr's last stormy years, Taylor reflected that perhaps his former student had learned some important lessons through his involvement in that strike. Another of Taylor's doctoral students, F. Ray Marshall, is today's secretary of labor.<sup>21</sup>

Since his retirement from active teaching in 1962, Taylor has carried on his work as emeritus professor. He has traveled to Viet Nam, Colombia, Egypt, and other developing nations that request his advice on questions of land tenure and economic policy. He continues to train and counsel graduate students, economists, historians, and students of farm labor, water law, and rural sociology.

Though an economist dealing in numbers, statistics,



*Taylor addressed the National Land for the People Symposium held in his honor in 1976.*

and ratios, Paul Taylor is a writer, not a quantifier. He likes words and uses vivid images. His ability to write colorful, clear, anecdotal, judicious, and eloquent analytical prose sets his work off from all other economists.

In his "Nonstatistical Notes from the Field," written in 1942 for *Land Policy Review*, he described his own approach. Challenging his colleagues with the statement that he was "not interested in averages but in people," Taylor explained, "By the time you statisticians know the numbers, what I'm trying to tell you in advance will be history, and you'll be too late."<sup>22</sup>

Steadfastly refusing to compromise himself by limiting his writing to "hard" facts and ever expanding his analyses across the traditional disciplines, Taylor has always published his material in the form in which it

was written. A typical passage dealing with the perambulatory life of harvest workers, written in 1951 for the President's Commission on Migratory Labor, reads as follows:

Their cohesion is scarcely greater than that of pebbles on a seashore. Each harvest collects and re-groups them, yet they remain loose aggregations of individuals and families held together during a short span of the calendar by no ties stronger than the proximity of the sources of work and pay. They live under a common condition, but create no techniques for meeting common problems. They wander about seeking livelihood but unlike nomadic tribes, they have no hereditary culture to sustain them.<sup>23</sup>

Paul Taylor's eighty-four years, his two dozen books, his boxes of papers in the Bancroft Library, his many students, his hundreds of articles, his eloquent prose,



and his influence through others evidence his significance as a thinker, as a scholar, and as a social mover. Absorbing the ideas of his Wisconsin teachers, he transplanted them to a western setting, nurtured them, and watched them germinate and grow.

Today, his work bears fruit. The cause of farm workers now seems assured, and the acreage and residency requirements of the Reclamation Act of 1902, although under heavy attack, are being taken seriously. Choosing his words with care, like a farmer about to harvest a fine crop, he told Lynn Ludlow of the San Francisco *Examiner* in November, 1976, "It's markedly different today. We have a new generation of youngsters. They come and knock at my door. For many years . . . nobody ever did."<sup>25</sup>

The LaFollette photograph is courtesy the San Francisco History Room, San Francisco Public Library; the photograph of Taylor teaching is from the Bancroft Library, University of California. The author photographed Taylor at the 1976 symposium.

## Notes

1. "Paul S. Taylor: California Social Scientist," (Interview, Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, 1973), I:97; Paul Taylor to Author, February 2, 28, 1978, in author's possession; Irving Stone, ed., *There Was Light: Autobiography of a University, Berkeley: 1868-1968* (New York, 1970), pp. 33-42; Testimony of Paul S. Taylor, *Hearings Before the United States Senate Subcommittee on Migratory Labor, Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, Senate, 92 Cong., 1 and 2 sess., January 11, 1972, Pt. 3A* (Washington, D.C., 1972), p. 782. For background on Commons and the University of Wisconsin, see Benjamin Rader, *The Academic Mind and Reform: The Influence of Richard T. Ely in American Life* (Madison, Wisconsin, 1966), pp. v, 10, 22-23, 217.
2. Paul S. Taylor, "With the Marines at Chateau Thierry," Paul S. Taylor Collected Papers, Bancroft Library; Taylor, "The Sailor's Union of the Pacific," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1922); "Taylor: Social Scientist," I: 1-10, 85-88, 92; Stone, ed., *There Was Light*, pp. 35-36.
3. "Taylor: Social Scientist," I:98; Interviews with Taylor, May 23, June 15, 1975.
4. David E. Lane to Paul S. Taylor, February 15, 1927; Harold L. Leupp to Taylor, July 31, 1930; R. H. Maddox to Taylor, March 15, 1928; Analysis of Mexican Savings Accounts, First National Bank, Holtville, May 31, 1927; San Diego Branch Office Report, Claims Filed With California State Department of Labor, San Diego—Imperial County, January, 1926—December, 1926, Paul S. Taylor Collection of Notes and Interviews Concerning Mexican Labor, Bancroft Library; Imperial Valley Field Notes; Orange County Field Notes; Interview with U.S. Border Patrolman, Tubac Station, Arizona, November 3, 1928, p. 13; Interview with Joe Molino [1928], p. 73; Interview with William Lopez, October 28, 1928, pp. 73-74; Interview with Juan Estrada, San Luis Pool Hall, El Centro, October 18, 1928, p. 76, Paul S. Taylor Field Notes, Series A, Set I, Bancroft Library; "Taylor: Social Scientist," I:90-95, 106-107, 199-200; II:101, 108.
5. Paul S. Taylor to Thomas Mahony, December 11, 1927; January 24, 1929; July 9, 1931; June 28, 1934; Mahony to Taylor, July 14, 1934, Thomas Mahony Papers, University of Notre Dame Archives; W. H. Guild to Taylor, July 20, 1928; F. E. Slatcz to Taylor, June 6, 1929; J. S. Pyeatt to Taylor, July 17, 1928, Taylor Collection of Notes and Interviews; "Taylor: Social Scientist," I:106-107, II:101-108.
6. Paul S. Taylor, *Mexican Labor in the United States: Imperial Valley, California* (Berkeley, 1928); . . . *Valley of the South Platte, Colorado* (Berkeley, 1929); . . . *Migration Statistics* (Berkeley, 1929); . . . *Racial School Statistics, California, 1927* (Berkeley, 1929); . . . *Dimmit County, Winter Garden District, South Texas* (Berkeley, 1930); . . . *Bethlehem, Penn.* (Berkeley, 1931); *Chicago and the Calumet Region* (Berkeley, 1932); . . . *Migration Statistics, II* (Berkeley, 1933); . . . *Migration Statistics, IV* (Berkeley, 1934); . . . *An American Mexican Frontier: Nueces County, Texas* (Chapel Hill, 1934); "Taylor: Social Scientist," I:107. Manuel Gamio's notes and interviews are at The Bancroft Library. For Gamio's contributions, see Robert Redfield, "The Antecedents of Mexican Immigration to the United States," *American Journal of Sociology*, XXXV (November, 1929): 433-438; and Gamio, "The Influence of Migrations in Mexican Life," Taylor Collection of Notes and Interviews.
7. Abraham Hoffman, "An Unusual Monument: Paul S. Taylor's *Mexican Labor in the United States* Monographs Series," *Pacific Historical Review*, XLV (May, 1976): 269-270; "Taylor Social Scientist," I:113-116, 201.
8. Paul S. Taylor and Clark Kerr, eds., "Documentary History of Cotton Picker's Strike in California, 1933," *Hearings Before the Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, 76 Cong., 3 sess., Pt. 54* (Washington, D.C., 1940), p. 19947.
9. "Ira B. Cross: Portrait of An Economics Professor," (Oral Interview, Regional Oral History Project, The Bancroft Library, 1967), p. 18; Interview with Clarence H. Wilson,

- December 22, 1933; Interview with Sheriff Buckner, December 20, 1933; Interview with Sheriff Hill, December 21, 1933; Interview at Clayton Gin, November 18, 1933; Interview with Sam White, November 17, 1933, Taylor Collection of Notes and Interviews; Notes Re Cotton Picker's Strike; Miscellaneous Correspondence in Relation to Cotton Picker's Strike, Paul S. Taylor Material Relating to Agriculture and Maritime Strikes in California, Bancroft Library; Taylor and Kerr, eds., "Documentary," pp. 19945-20036.
10. Stone, ed., *There Was Light*, pp. 39-40; Paul Taylor, address to the Commonwealth Club of California, August, 1935, Taylor Collected Papers, Bancroft Library; Dorothea Lange Field Notes, May 22, 1935, Dorothea Lange Collection, The Oakland Museum; Lowry Nelson to Paul V. Maris, Weekly Report for Week Ending February 16, 1934, Harry Hopkins Papers, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library; Edward Rowell and Tom Vasey, "Field Report," August 12, 1935, Taylor Material; Taylor, "The R. A. and Migratory Labor," *Plan Age*, II (June, 1936):26-29; San Francisco News February 13, 1936; Walter J. Stein, *California and the Dust Bowl Migration* (Westport, Conn., 1973), 166-190; Field Notes, August 16, 1940, Charles Todd-Robert Sonkin Collection, Library of Congress Folklore Archives.
  11. "Walter E. Packard: Land and Power Development in California, Greece and Latin America," (Oral Interview, Regional Oral History Project, Bancroft Library, 1970), pp. 72, 306, 308, 310-312.
  12. Wesley Burnside, *Maynard Dixon* (Provo, Utah, 1974), pp. 67, 126-128; Museum of Modern Art, *Dorothea Lange* (New York, 1966), pp. 6-9; "Dorothea Lange: The Making of a Documentary Photographer" (Oral Interview, Regional Oral History Project, Bancroft Library, 1968), p. 167-168; F. Jack Hurley, *Portrait of a Decade* (Baton Rouge, 1972), pp. 13-14, 52-53; Edith Hamlin, "Maynard Dixon: Artist of the American West," *California Historical Quarterly*, LIII (Winter, 1974): 365-368; Judy Strasser, "A Sense of Place" (n.p., mimeo), Lange Collection; Lou Maclean, "Portrait of a Liberal," *People's World*, October 19, 1939; Roy Stryker and Nancy Wood, *In This Proud Land* (Boston, 1973), pp. 7-9; Daniel Dixon, "Dorothea Lange," *Modern Photography*, XVI (December, 1952): 68-77, 138-141; Willard Van Dyke, "The Photographs of Dorothea Lange," *Camera Craft*, XXXXI (October, 1934): 461-467; Pare Lorentz, "Dorothea Lange, Camera with a Purpose," *U.S. Camera Annual* (Washington, D.C., 1941), pp. 93-116; Werner Severin, "Photographic Documentation by the Farm Security Administration" (M.A. Thesis, University of Missouri, 1959), pp. 10-11, 41, 17; Lange Field Notes, May 22, 1935 and Notes on Native American Fruit Tramps on Putah Creek, May 25, 1935, Lange Collection; Lange to Roy Stryker, December 31, 1935, Lange-Stryker Correspondence, Oakland Museum and Archives of American Art; Interview with Ronald Partridge, March 12, 1975; Interview with Charles A. Lokey, November 27, 1976.
  13. Dorothea Lange's career was unimpeded by marriage to Taylor. Obtaining a job as a documentary photographer with the historical division of the Farm Security Administration, she set about documenting California farm laborers in the same way Mathew Brady documented the Civil War and Lewis Hine documented child labor in textile mills—with power and honesty. Lange's most famous photograph, "Migrant Mother," taken in a muddy pea field on March 9, 1936, is discussed in Lange, "The Assignment I'll Never Forget," *American West*, VII (May, 1970): 46; see also Taylor, "Migrant Mother," *ibid.*, pp. 41-45; Lange Field Notes, March 8-10, 1936; February 16, 1937, Lange Collection; Lange to Stryker, February 16, 1937, Russell Lee Correspondence, University of Louisville Photo Archives; Berkeley Daily Gazette, October 13, 1965; Taylor, "Social Scientist," I:111-113.
  14. Dorothea Lange and Paul Taylor, *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion* (New York, 1939, Reprint 1969).
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  16. Paul S. Taylor and Tom Vasey, "Historical Background of California Farm Labor," *Rural Sociology*, I (September, 1936): 281-295; Taylor and Vasey, "Contemporary Background of California Farm Labor," *ibid.*, I (December, 1936):401-419; Taylor, "Power Farming and Labor Displacement," *Monthly Labor Review*, XXXXVI (April, 1938): 852-876; Taylor, "From the Ground Up," *Survey Graphic*, XXV (September, 1936):526-529, 537-538; Henry George, *Our Land and Land Policy*, National and State (San Francisco, 1871), p. 345.



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20. "Arthur J. McFadden: Recollections" (Oral Interview, Oral History Project, University of California at Los Angeles, 1965), pp. 85-90; "Earl Coke: Reminiscences on People and Change in California Agriculture, 1900-1975" (Oral Interview, University of California at Davis Oral History Project, 1976), pp. 37, 245; "Claude B. Hutchison: The College of Agriculture, University of California, 1922-1952," (Oral Interview, Regional Oral History Project, The Bancroft Library, 1974), pp. 419-430; "Roy C. Bainer: The Engineering of Abundance" (Oral Interview, University of California at Davis Oral History Project, 1975), pp. 33-109; Roy M. Pike to Robert Sproul, October 7, 1939, Bank of America Archives; "University Aid in Anti-Labor Stand Denied," *Daily Californian*, April 4, 1939; "Extension Service and Its Activities," *ibid.* December 4, 1939; Jim Hightower, *Hard Tomatoes, Hard Times: The Failure of the Land Grant College Complex* (Washington, D.C., 1972), pp. 2-8, 22-23, 32, 43, 68, 210; "Taylor: Social Scientist," I: 98-107, 180, 199-200.
21. "Taylor: Social Scientist," I: 160-210; Walter Goldschmidt, "Social Structure of a California Rural Community" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1942); Goldschmidt, *As You Sow* (New York, 1947); Stuart Jamieson, *Labor Unionism in American Agriculture* (Washington, D.C., 1945, Reprint 1978); Lloyd Fisher, *The Harvest Labor Market in California* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953); Arthur Ross, "Agricultural Labor and Social Legislation" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1941); Clark Kerr, "Productive Enterprises of the Unemployed, 1931-1938" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1939); Freddie Ray Marshall, "History of Labor Organization in the South" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, 1955).
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23. Paul S. Taylor, "Migratory Labor and the Body Politic" (Mimeo, 1951), President's Commission on Migratory Labor Papers, Harry Truman Library.
24. Lynn Ludlow, San Francisco *Examiner*, November 28, 1976; San Francisco *Bay Guardian*, December 3, 1976; December 5, 1976; Taylor, "California Farm Labor: A Review," *Agricultural History*, XXXXII (January, 1968): 49-53; Taylor, "Hand Laborers in the Western Sugar Beet Industry," *ibid.*, XXXXI (January, 1967): 19-26.

Although Lynn Ludlow's work has only been cited at the end of this article, the author has drawn heavily on his interviews with Taylor as well as on his reporting on western water law.

## Defending the Bill of Rights— The ACLU Archives at CHS

### REVIEWS

Charles Wollenberg, *Reviews Editor*

Now open to researchers at CHS is the first record group of the extensive archives of the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California. Representing one of the richest unexplored collections of modern California history, the entire archive covers such controversial and provocative issues as the San Francisco general strike of 1934, Bird Man of Alcatraz, the Eureka Mill riots of 1935, the Santa Rosa Tar and Feather Vigilance Committee, IWW activities in the Imperial Valley, McCarthyism, loyalty oaths, and the Berkeley Free Speech Movement. This collection of ACLU scrapbooks, ephemera, correspondence, and organizational and legal records will doubtless provide important insights for future books, articles, and theses.

Established on a permanent basis in the midst of the 1934 general strike, the Northern California affiliate of the ACLU traces its origins to the founding of the national office in December, 1915. At that time, concerned individuals of liberal political persuasion convened in Washington, D.C., to form the American Union Against Militarism and proposed to defend the civil rights of conscientious objectors and to fight for the repeal of the conscription law.<sup>1</sup> Committed to protecting "the rights of free speech, free press, free assembly, and liberty of conscience,"<sup>2</sup> especially in wartime, the group established a Civil Liberties Bureau in July, 1917. According to the *New York Times*, the bureau's chief purpose was "to give legal aid and advice through attorneys and committees of citizens in all parts of the United States to persons whose rights are invaded under pressure of war."<sup>3</sup> By 1920, the bureau had evolved into an autonomous organization named the American Civil Liberties Union. In these early years, under the directorship of Roger Baldwin, the ACLU worked with such sympathetic lawyers as Clarence Darrow, Arthur Gar-

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Karl Feichtmeir is Manuscripts Librarian at CHS. Recently completing his MLS degree at University of California at Berkeley, he is currently investigating the application of computerized indexing for archival and manuscript cataloging.



field Hays, and William Jennings Bryan to defend the rights of radicals, conscientious objectors jailed for disloyalty, and other individuals who were prevented from organizing, speaking, or distributing literature. The ACLU also brought test cases to court, including the famous Scopes Trial about the teaching of evolution in public schools.

By the early 1920s, a number of large cities including Los Angeles had established local committees (later called affiliates) which worked in conjunction with the national office in New York. Many postwar ACLU cases involved the defense of people charged with violating the wartime Criminal Syndicalism law which made illegal "the advocacy of violent methods of political or industrial change."<sup>4</sup> By 1926, sixty-nine out of the nation's seventy-five statutory convictions under this law had occurred in California,<sup>5</sup> and the job of defending accused individuals fell heavily on the already overextended Los Angeles office.

Accordingly, ACLU Director Roger Baldwin traveled to California in July, 1926, to help establish an ACLU committee in San Francisco. A second committee in the Bay Area, he reasoned, was necessary to provide assistance to the Southern California committee, as well as to enable the ACLU to lobby more effectively in Sacramento for the repeal of the Criminal Syndicalism law which the group viewed as patently unconstitutional.

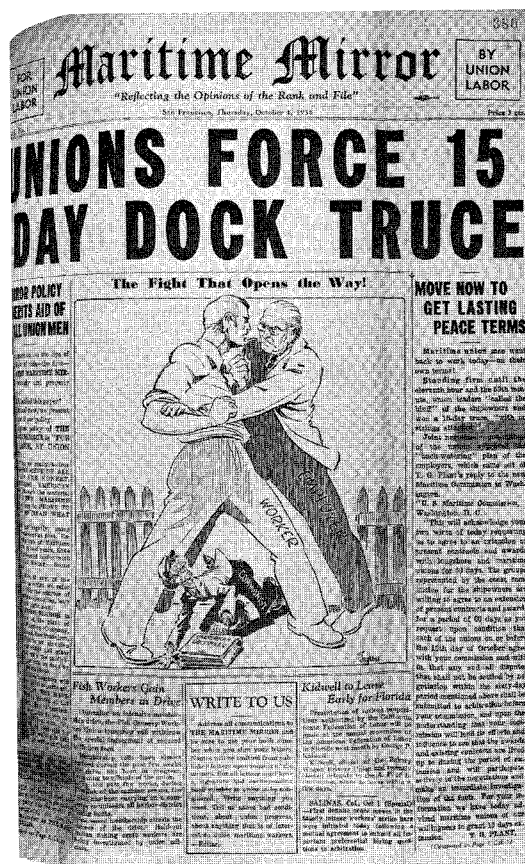
Despite the resolute efforts of Bay Area attorney Austin Lewis and Baldwin, who agreed to help support a temporary Northern California ACLU committee, financial difficulties compelled a suspension of the Northern California operations in the fall of 1927. The groundwork had been laid, however, and some seven years later, the same year that the Los Angeles committee celebrated its fifteenth anniversary, the Northern California committee was resurrected.

In July, 1934, San Francisco had been the scene of the "most widespread general strike in U.S. history."<sup>6</sup> The

strike of the International Longshoreman's Association, soon joined by other unions, was followed in August by an outburst of vigilante terrorism against supposed sympathizers. These attacks were conveniently ignored by the police, and ACLU members Chester S. Williams and Ernest Besig were transferred from their assignments in Los Angeles to San Francisco to defend the vigilante victims.

By September, Chester Williams, who was succeeded by Dr. George Hedley, again launched efforts to raise money to support an ACLU committee in the Bay Area. Operating on a shoestring out of Austin Lewis' law office, the Northern California committee again gained a new director in 1936. This time, however, the individual stayed for thirty-eight years. His name was Ernest Besig, a member from Southern California who had skillfully defended the rights of nine strikers in the Eureka Mills strike of 1935.

Besig was a foresighted individual who recognized the historical significance of the street handouts, pamphlets, newspapers, flyers and miscellaneous literature produced by both the left and the right out of the turbulence of the thirties, forties, and fifties. During his tenure, he determinedly collected three volumes of bound, indexed, and numbered ephemeral material. Volume 1 contains information on aliens, their rights and freedoms, and the treatment they were afforded in the United States. Volume 2 contains pamphlets on general civil liberties issues, the constitution, and the rights of Native Americans. Volume 3 is filled with important material relating to labor unions. Included are various issues of the *Waterfront Worker*, the mimeographed longshoremen's weekly published during the general strike, and another rare bulletin issued by the striking bargemen entitled *Steamboat Round the Bend*. As well, the collection includes a multitude of fascinating pro-labor pamphlets and throwaway flyers with such colorful titles as *Hell on the Front*, *The Maritime Crisis—What it Is and What it Isn't*, and *Buy a Ship and Make*



*Your Fortune.* An equal representation of material published by shipowners opposing the union strikes is also included. Exemplary titles of the latter include *Communists of the Waterfront Doomed*, *Coast Committee for the Shipowners*, and *Moscow Bridges Falling Down* (a satirical indictment of Harry Bridges and his supposed links with Moscow).

Besig applied the same assiduous care to collecting newspaper articles as he did to collecting ephemera material. In all, he amassed a total of forty large scrapbooks, all indexed, from the years 1936 to 1940. Three volumes deal solely with Harry Bridges and the fight to prevent his deportation to Australia. The remainder focus on civil liberty issues and cases involving immigration, free speech, security clearance denials, loyalty oaths, discrimination, and vigilante activity. Extensive material is also available on leading anti-Communists such as Martin Dies, the Tom Mooney case and the San Francisco Emergency Relief Administration, and on the efforts to rid the UC Berkeley campus of so-called "Reds" beginning in 1936 with Dr. Max Radin and continuing into the 1960s.

By 1936, Besig had also established a monthly news-

Berkeley Gazette  
APRIL 20 to 25  
IS  
FINGERPRINT  
WEEK

This week has been set aside to complete the job of fingerprinting every man, woman and child in the City of Berkeley.

**DO YOUR SHARE**  
**Register Your Prints!**

Be so careful of your identity as you are of your body. Labels and trade marks are the identification marks of standard merchandise.

Your fingerprints are the trade mark, the physiological label of your identity.

As the merchandise value is guaranteed by its trade mark so is the integrity of your identity guaranteed by your fingerprints. Neither has value or meaning of worth unless registered.

Register your prints and protect yourself and your family against fraud or substitution.

**Berkeley Leads the Nation In  
Voluntary Fingerprinting—  
Let's Hold That Lead!**

*The Maritime Mirror, an anti-communist rank-and-file paper first published in 1936, is one of many workers' and employers' newsletters preserved in the ACLU archives.*

*A remarkable fingerprinting effort in Berkeley and loitering laws forbidding three or more individuals from meeting in the streets after 8 p.m. are among the events of 1936 noted in the archives' clipping file.*

paper for the growing membership called *ACLU News*. A rare complete run of this paper, along with annual reports published from 1945 to 1966, provide excellent documentation of the activities and involvement of the ACLU of Northern California.

Cumulatively, the material in this first record group represents less than a tenth of the half-million items in the ACLU archives at CHS. The bulk of the collection, mainly non-printed records of great interest, will be made available to researchers as it is catalogued and processed.

## Notes

1. Robert L. Knutson, *The American Civil Liberties Union in Northern California*, M.A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1950.
2. *New York Times*, July 3, 1917, p. 5.
3. Ibid.
4. *A Strike is Criminal Syndicalism—in California*, pamphlet published by the ACLU, New York City, March, 1931.
5. Knutson, *ACLU*, p. 13.
6. Paul S. Taylor and Norman Leon Gold, "San Francisco and the General Strike," *Survey Graphic*, XXIII (September, 1934): 405-10.



## Book Reviews

### *Mexican Workers in the United States: Historical and Political Perspectives.*

Edited by George C. Kiser and Martha Woody Kiser.  
(Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1979.  
295 pp. Paper \$7.50.)

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Reviewed by Matt S. Meier, *History Department, University of Santa Clara, and author, with Feliciano Rivera, of The Chicanos: A History of Mexican Americans (1972), co-author of A Bibliography for Chicano History (1972), co-author of Dictionary of Mexican American History (Greenwood Press, 1980), and co-editor of Readings of La Raza: The Twentieth Century (1974).*

This collection of readings about Mexican workers in the United States is divided into six sections. The first three are chronological: World War I Era, Repatriation during the Great Depression, and The Second Bracero Era (1942-1964). The last three are topical: Illegal Mexican Workers, Mexican Commuters, and Mexico's Border Industrialization Program. Each of the six sections begins with a brief historical overview of the period or topic to follow and a brief introduction to the articles within it. Inevitably the thirty-four selections vary in the degree to which they illuminate the economic and political impact of Mexican workers in the United States, but altogether they fulfill the editors' objective of making "some of the more useful but less accessible literature readily available." The long-term problem of undocumented workers, to which nearly a third of the book is devoted, receives heavy emphasis.

Perhaps the most important contribution of the book is the inclusion of considerable material on the Mexican view, both official and journalistic, primary and secondary. Much of this has been previously accessible only to a handful of interested scholars. These Mexican source materials also aptly illustrate the changes, and sometimes the contradictions, in Mexican attitudes toward the export of her workers to the United States.

A serious weakness of the collection is the failure to include information on the heavy migration of workers in the 1920s, other than brief scattered references. Also missing is any direct reference to the Box Bill in the 1920s—an important part of the effort to include Mexico in the quota system established by new immigration legislation and a serious absence in a book whose title includes the term

"Political Perspectives." A discussion of the speed-up in migration to the United States between 1890 and 1914 would have helped the uninitiated to understand the patterns after the era described by the editors.

These selections, then, present various issues concerning Mexican workers in the United States from a variety of viewpoints, official and unofficial, pro and con. The reader must make his own judgment on the validity of the opposing viewpoints presented, and in the process he can obtain a better understanding of the important contemporary issue of Mexican migration to the United States and its impact on our economy, polity, and society.

The Selected Bibliography at the end of the volume is a valuable guide to periodical and monograph materials dealing with the topic of the immigrant Mexican worker, as are the notes to the six section introductions by the editors. A statistical table on immigration during the period covered might have been a valuable addition to the book.

### *The California Water Atlas.*

Edited by William L. Kahrl. (Sacramento: State of California, 1979. 118 pp. \$37.50.)

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Reviewed by Charles Wollenberg, *Reviews Editor of this magazine and research consultant for three television documentaries on California water policies.*

"Small is beautiful" must no longer be the operating principle of Governor Jerry Brown's administration. *The California Water Atlas*, produced by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research in cooperation with the Department of Water Resources, is a very big and beautiful book. It is also well-written, spectacularly illustrated, and filled with useful information for expert and layman alike.

The atlas was prepared by a small army of public officials, scholars, and other experts assembled by editor William Kahrl and an advisory committee chaired by Stewart Brand. Although the text is the product of many hands, the separate contributions have been substantially edited to give the prose a unified and, with few exceptions, readable style.

Kahrl himself is an historian, and he chose four skilled practitioners of the craft—Norris Hundley, Robert Kelley, Lawrence Lee, and Elmo Richardson—to work on the

*Imported water flows through a new irrigation ditch, as a proud onlooker perhaps daydreams of future crops.*



historical sections. As a result, these chapters are the best in the book and together comprise the finest short history of the state's water use and development in print. The atlas also includes good discussions of California's water resources, the management of the water system for competing agricultural, urban, conservation and recreational purposes, the implications of water law and water pricing practices, and the tough problems of ground water management and water quality standards.

The book's most dramatic element is visual. It contains hundreds of beautiful maps, charts, an excellent collection of historical and contemporary photographs, and stunning satellite pictures of the state supplied by NASA's Ames Laboratory. If there is any criticism to be made, it is that the book is almost too big and too beautiful. The 16 x 18-inch size makes the volume difficult to handle, and in some of the charts, simple clarity seems to have been sacrificed for visual beauty.

For all its opulence, however, the atlas is basically a serious,

scholarly work which Californians can well use to help make some very hard policy choices for the future. In the past, cheap, often subsidized water has been a major cause of much of the state's massive growth. This is particularly true of growth in agriculture, our biggest business and consumer of 85% of our water. The authors correctly note that today the "halcyon days when ample new water supplies were available at low development costs are gone forever. . . ." California's basic water problem is how to respond to this fact. Do we meet future needs primarily through expensive new dams, reservoirs, and canals, or through difficult and sometimes equally expensive conservation and reclamation efforts? The answer will do much to determine the state's economic and social reality in the twenty-first century.

*The California Water Atlas* will be an indispensable sourcebook for decades to come. Even at \$37.50, it is a tremendous bargain, a public service in the best sense of the term.



*Lost Harbor: The Controversy over Drake's California Anchorage.*

By Warren L. Hanna. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 476 pp. \$15.95.)

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*Reviewed by Robert H. Power, CHS Trustee and the leading proponent of a Drake landing site in San Francisco Bay.*

More than half of the 394 pages in Warren Hanna's *Lost Harbor: The Controversy over Drake's California Anchorage* are allocated to a critical analysis of what Hanna identifies as a "landmark debate." The original debate was organized in 1974 by J. S. Holliday, former director of the California Historical Society, and Marilyn Ziebarth, editor of the *California Historical Quarterly*, as a way to present with equality the controversy concerning Drake's California anchorage through the very words of its chief debators—Raymond Aker, V. Aubrey Neasham, and this reviewer. The publication of the Hanna book, therefore, catapults the Drake Debate issue of the *Quarterly* (Fall, 1974) into prominence as an example of a unique inquiry into a complex historical controversy.

Warren Hanna, an attorney, applies what the dust jacket of his book describes as "keen judicial analysis" to the unraveling of the 400-year-old Drake "conundrum." Although he purports to write from an "objective" or "non-partisan" point of view and although he articulately holds that "there is still no solution to the Drake anchorage riddle," Hanna is naturally no more objective, non-partisan, or disinterested in furthering his non-committed point of view than a Drake scholar who holds for a specific landing site.

Author Hanna has collected books about Drake in California for over fifty years, but this long association with the subject may have caused some of the internal weaknesses in the text. For instance, Chapter 10, "Contemporary Maps and Charts," has ninety-eight footnotes, none of whose dated citations were published after 1937. While this Rip Van Winkle approach to scholarship gives the chapter a learned appearance, in fact it makes it obsolete by a decade or more. Similarly, the essay following the heading "The Silver Map of the World" goes to great length to suggest the date, place of issue, and maker of this exquisite map in silver, but Hanna fails on all three points because he apparently was not familiar with his own bibliographical entry, "Kraus, Hans P., Sir Francis Drake, Amsterdam 1970,"

in which a photograph of a signed issue establishes the silver map's date as 1589, the place as London, and the maker as Michael Mercator.

Hanna dismisses the *Portus Novae Albionis* plan as valueless evidence because proponents of eleven different anchorage sites have used "the *Portus* as a part of the evidentiary support for their claims." Using the same argument, he would have concluded that Cinderella's ugly sisters must have worn out the shoe before the prince was able to fit it onto Cinderella's foot.

Since the *Quarterly's* debate, this reviewer presented a paper entitled "A Study of Two Historic Maps" to a California Historical Society members' meeting and made obsolete the earlier parts of the CHS Drake debate concerning the *Portus Novae Albionis* plan. Although the paper is included in Hanna's bibliography, Hanna fails to bring this new concept in cartographic knowledge into the text itself, leaving the reader ignorant on this and significant new computer studies concerning the *Portus Plan*.

Hanna likewise fails to report accurately another post-debate development—the discovery of the 1567 English silver sixpence at Rancho Olompali which he inaccurately reports as not "discovered under circumstances entitling it to be considered as archeologically authenticated." This find was a carefully documented discovery by the archeologist Charles Slaymaker, who had a carbon-14 test made on a redwood post fragment to confirm and refine the age of the coin's discovery horizon.

For its many shortcomings, *Lost Harbor* is the only hard-cover book in over a quarter of a century to draw materials on Drake's California landfall into one volume and offer an index, table of contents, bibliography, pictorial material, reprints of the critical documents, and a review of the Drake Debate issue of the *Quarterly*. In the end Hanna opts for a search for more clues which he hints may be found "on Marin County beaches or somewhere in the British archives."

Perhaps if Hanna had better understood such issues as Elizabethan cartography, had not been put off by the challenge to the Plate of Brass by the Bancroft Library, had given fair consideration to the sixpence found at Rancho Olompali, and had better understood the flora and fauna of California, he might well have titled his book *Lost Harbor Found* and been as prejudiced for a specific landing site as any of the other Drake debators.

*Hard Rock Epic: Western Miners and the Industrial Revolution, 1860-1910.*

By Mark Wyman. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. x, 331 pp. \$15.95.)

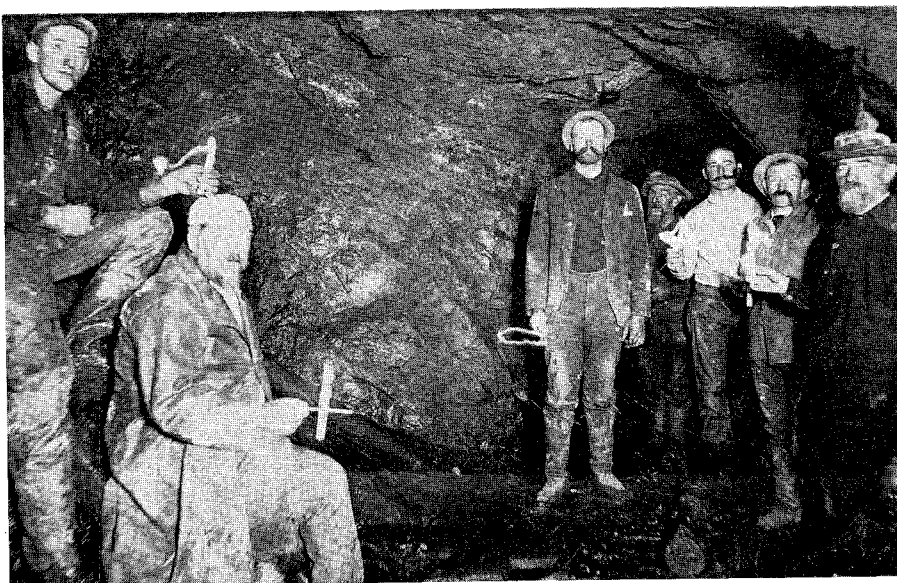
*Reviewed by R. E. Lingenfelter, Research Physicist at University of California, San Diego, and author of several books on western American history.*

The hard rock miners in the American West faced both geographical and technological frontiers. Their struggles on the physical frontier have been widely told, but their struggles on the industrial frontier are less well known. In *Hard Rock Epic*, Mark Wyman gives us a broad panorama of the hardships confronted by the miners in the technological and economic transformation of mining in the West between 1860 and 1910. With a wealth of examples, Wyman studies the impact of industrialization and absentee ownership on the miners' way of life and their responses in the mines, in the union halls, and in the legislatures.

Chapters focusing on the problems of regular pay, mine safety, and accident liability provide new insight into these questions. Wyman clearly demonstrates that the hazards and deprivations of the industrial frontier could be much

more taxing on both body and spirit than any in the natural frontier. Lawsuits and illegal seizures provided occasional remedy for miners left nearly destitute when companies defaulted on back pay, but for the unfortunate miner who came to be injured in the increasingly dangerous operations, compensation was rare indeed. Some company managers thought it better business to fight liability suits all the way to the US Supreme Court, if necessary, rather than pay even a pittance in compensation, for fear of establishing a dangerous precedent.

Other chapters on unionization, political action, and radicalism also contribute to our understanding of the hard rock miners' response, although these aspects of western industrial relations have already received much more attention. One complaint this reviewer would make with these sections is that the strong commitment of the early miners' unions to industrial unionism rather than trade unionism—a commitment that laid the foundation of western mining labor philosophy—is not brought out here. Another complaint is that the chapter on *Who Will Work* seems to blur rather than delineate the complex racial, ethnic, and religious tensions among the miners. Chinese employment in the mines is treated rather superficially, and the problems of Mexican miners in California, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico are not addressed at all. The small errors



*Hard rock miners break their grueling routines to pose for an adventurous photographer. The candle trails hint at the necessarily long underground exposure.*



which creep into all works, such as the misplacement of two prominent Nevada camps, Eureka and Unionville, in California, are more a source of amusement than complaint.

These criticisms do not detract from the fact that *Hard Rock Epic* makes a solid and much needed contribution to the history of both the western mining frontier and the industrial revolution.

*Gertrude Atherton.*

By Charlotte S. McClure. (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1979. 163 pp. \$9.95.)

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*Reviewed by Carolyn Forrey, Associate Professor of American Studies at Empire State College, State University of New York.*

Charlotte McClure's introduction to the life and work of one of California's most prolific and popular novelists presents Atherton as a social historian of her times, a view that was also held by Atherton and many of her critics. Atherton's work does indeed provide a fascinating study in American social history, and her portrayals of San Francisco society in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are particularly valuable. But it is necessary to recognize both the strengths and weaknesses of Atherton's social vision as interpreter of her times. McClure, in choosing to present Atherton's life and work primarily in Atherton's own terms, fails to present a framework for understanding Atherton's vision in social and historical perspective.

The major strength of McClure's study is her treatment of Atherton's work as fiction. Her analysis of Atherton's characterization, plot structure, and narrative style is well done. She devotes the bulk of her literary study to discussion of Atherton's California heroines and their struggles to build meaningful lives in the face of restrictive social norms for women. McClure's work here, particularly her chapter on *Black Oxen*, follows closely the lines of my own analysis in "Gertrude Atherton and The New Woman" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1971), which she did not acknowledge.

Atherton's many novels depicting women's attempts to break away from the social, emotional, and imaginative bonds of narrowly restrictive feminine roles, can well be appreciated as insightful social history, for it is here that

Atherton achieved her greatest psychological depth, keenest social perceptions, and broadest social sympathies. In discussing other aspects of Atherton's fiction as social history, however, McClure needs to apply a more careful historical analysis. Her discussion of Atherton's concern for the poor, Atherton's belief in democracy, and Atherton's portrayal of characters of various social backgrounds and classes needs to be qualified by acknowledgment of Atherton's firm identification with aristocratic values and perspectives, the disdain of her aristocratic heroes and heroines toward "the lower orders," and the fear and hatred of "undesirable races" which surfaces constantly and bluntly in her fiction. Atherton's portrayals of working class and even middle class characters are stereotypes; they offer little insight into working class experiences in Atherton's time, though they reveal much about the attitudes of Atherton's own social class at the turn of the century.

McClure's study provides a useful introduction to Atherton's work as fiction, though she does not attempt to evaluate it in context of American literary history. Her brief survey of critical response to Atherton's work does not develop any substantive critical ideas, and her own summary is inconclusive. While McClure's book is less successful in placing Atherton's work in social and historical perspective, it may well stimulate the interests of social historians in one of California's most colorful and contradictory writers.

The photographs are from the CHS Library.

## In Memoriam

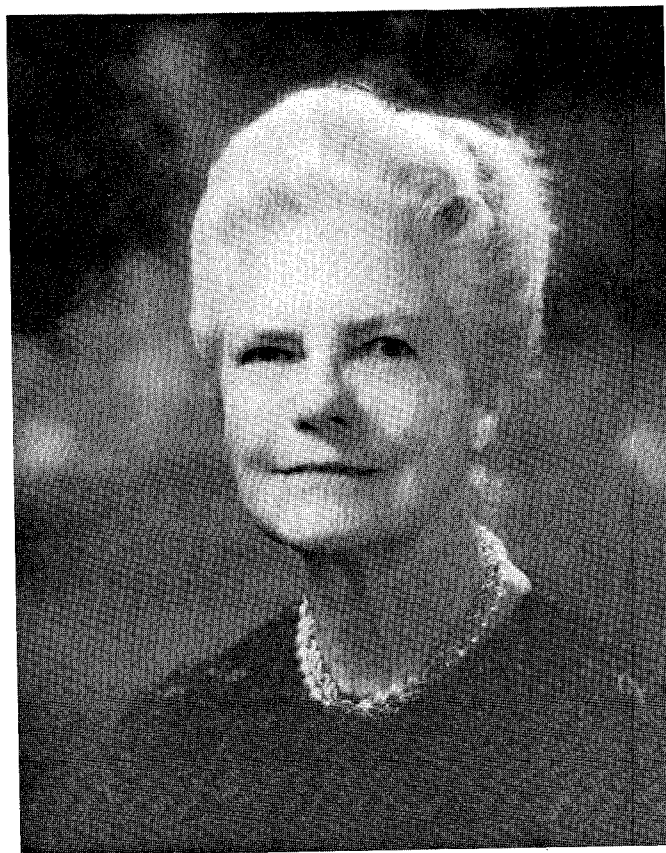
The kind of living KATHARINE BIXBY HOTCHKIS packed between her birth and death is not easily described in words. If she herself were writing this remembrance, she would "stick to the facts," then laugh and add, "But never let facts stand in the way of a good story." In her case, facts alone make a good enough story.

She was born June 16, 1899, in Long Beach, California, in an adobe house built in 1806 on a ranch that had once been part of a Spanish land grant. Her paternal grandfather, John Bixby, who migrated from Maine in 1871, acquired a portion of this Rancho Los Alamitos and bequeathed it to his son, Fred Hathaway Bixby. Fred and his wife Florence brought up their five children there. Katharine, the eldest, learned early how to rope and herd cattle. She remembered going on her first roundup at age seven, being tutored on the ranch with her sisters and brothers, attending boarding school in Piedmont, and graduating from Vassar in 1921 after spending her junior year at the University of California at Berkeley.

Diaries which she kept following her graduation reveal seeds of the interests which would engage her the rest of her life: devotion to family, community involvement, love and respect for the land. In 1923 she married Preston Hotchkis of Los Angeles, and they began to realize a goal she had voiced since childhood, "a happy marriage and four children." Four offspring and ten grandchildren helped them celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary six years ago.

She lived eighty years and to the end maintained her intense interest in the world around her. She served long terms as trustee and director on the boards of Pitzer College, Westridge School, Southern California Symphony Association, KCET Channel 28, Los Angeles Psychiatric Services, Pasadena Visiting Nurses Association, and Bixby Ranch Company. A persevering fundraiser, she swelled the resources of the Community Chest, Red Cross, Los Angeles Music Center, and many other civic projects. Her concern for the quality of life in a crowded world led her to join a small group of women who established the first birth control clinic in Pasadena in the early 1930s.

In recent years when she turned her attention to what she called "living history," she brought her insight and candor to the Board of Trustees of the California Historical Society. Loyal and effectively supporting the Society, she endorsed programs which reached out to a statewide audience and established the Katharine Bixby Hotchkis Inviolable Endowment Fund, whose income supports CHS activities. Initiating



the restoration of the Old Mill in San Marino, the historic adobe building which now houses the Southern California headquarters of the Society, she received the Garden Club of America's Conservation Award in 1972.

Recognizing the keenness of her memory of the past, the Society published two charming illustrated volumes of her recollections, *Christmas Eve at Rancho Los Alamitos* (1971) and *Trip With Father* (1971, reprinted in 1979). The latter account tells of a horseback excursion made in 1916 with her father and two sisters from San Francisco to their ranch in Long Beach.

Mrs. Hotchkis died on October 10, 1979, after long illnesses. She was surrounded by her family in the house which she and her husband built and lived in for fifty years. Her warmth, ebullience, and generous spirit will always be remembered.

The California Historical Society is receiving contributions in memory of Katharine Bixby Hotchkis.



# California Check List

By Gary Kurutz

The California Check List provides notice of publication of books, pamphlets, and monographs pertaining to the history of California. Readers knowing of recent (1978-79) publications which need additional publicity are requested to send the following bibliographic information to the compiler of this list: Author, title, location and name of publisher, date of publication, number of pages, price, and address where item can be purchased if not carried at general bookstores.

- Adams, Ramon F. *More burs under the saddle. Books and histories of the West*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979. 189 pp. \$14.95.
- Atlas of California*. Culver City: Pacific Book Center, Inc., 1979. 200 pp. Publisher, 9555 Washington Blvd., Culver City, 90230. \$47.50.
- Baegert, Johann Jakob. *Observations in Lower California* (reprint). Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 238 pp. \$15.75.
- Bal, Peggy. *Pebbles in the stream. A history of Beale Air Force Base and neighboring areas*. Chico: Easter Publishing Company, 1979. 113 pp.
- Bartlett, Lee (ed.). *Benchmark and blaze: The emergence of William Everson*. Metuche, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1979. 274 pp. \$12.50.
- The Berkeley cookbook. A collection of choice and tested recipes by the ladies of Berkeley, California* (facsimile 1884 ed.). Berkeley: Creative Arts Book Company, 1979. 150 pp. Publisher, 833 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 94710. \$4.95.
- Brant, Michelle. *Timeless walks in San Francisco* (rev. ed.). Berkeley: Bookpeople, 1979. 70 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 68, Point Richmond, 94807. \$3.50.
- Bohakel, Charles A. *The historic Delta country—The bayou of the West: A guidebook to State Highway 160*. Antioch: by author, 1979. Author, P.O. Box 817, Antioch, 94509. \$3.00.
- Bullock, Paul, & Jerry Voorhis. *The idealist as politician*. New York: Vantage Press, 1978. 364 pp. Publisher, 516 West 34th Street, New York, N.Y. 10001. \$10.95.
- Bullough, William A. *The blind boss and his city. Christopher Augustine Buckley and nineteenth century San Francisco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 336 pp. \$17.50.
- Camo, William, D. A. Carpenter, and Bill Hotchkiss. *William Everson: Poet from the San Joaquin*. Newcastle: The Blue Oak Press, 1979. 105 pp. Capra Press, P.O. Box 2068, Santa Barbara, 93120. \$5.00.
- Center for California Public Affairs. *California Museum Directory*. Claremont: by author, 1979. 75 pp. \$15.00.
- . *U. S. Government Offices in California: A directory*. Claremont: by author, 1979. 114 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 10, Claremont, 91711. \$15.00.
- Chase, John. *The sidewalk companion to Santa Cruz architecture* (rev. ed.). Santa Cruz: Paper Vision Press, 1979. 375 pp. Publisher, 1111 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, 95060. \$9.95.
- Comstock, David and Ardis. *Index to history of Nevada County by Thompson and West*. Grass Valley: Comstock Bonanza Press, 1979. 85 pp. Publisher, Route 2, Box 1724-C, Grass Valley, 95495. \$12.50.
- De Nevi, Don and Thomas Moulin. *Motor touring in old California*. Millbrae: Celestial Arts, 1979. 143 pp. Publisher, 231 Adrian Road, Millbrae, 94030. \$6.95.
- Dengler, Sandy. *Yosemite's marvelous creatures*. Yosemite: Flying Spur Press, 1979. Publisher, Box 278, Yosemite, 95389. 64 pp. \$3.75.
- Faragher, John Mack. *Women and men on the Overland Trail*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979. 281 pp. \$17.50.
- Friis, Leo J. *Historic buildings of pioneer Anaheim*. Santa Ana: Friis-Pioneer Press, 1979. 120 pp. Friends of the Anaheim Public Library, 500 West Broadway, Anaheim, 93085. \$8.50.
- Gernes, Phyllis L. *Hidden in the chaparral*. Garden Valley: by author, 1979. 209 pp. Author, Route 3, Box 38B, Garden Valley, 95633. Cloth \$9.95; paper \$5.95.
- Hamm, Edward, Jr. *When Fresno road the*

- rails. Glendale: Interurbans, 1979. 80 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 644, Glendale, 91205. \$9.50.
- Hodgkins, John B. *Thomas A. Edison and Major Frank McLaughlin: Their quest for gold in Butte County*. Chico: Association for Northern California Records and Research, 1979. Publisher, P.O. Box 3024, Chico, 95927. \$6.00.
- Holmes, Kenneth L. *Francis Drake's course in the North Pacific, 1579*. Monmouth, Oregon: by author, 1979. Author, 410 Orchard St., Monmouth, Oregon, 97361. \$3.00.
- Howard, Arthur D. *Geologic history of Middle California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 119 pp. \$3.95.
- Howard, Donald M. *Archaeological resources of coastal Monterey County*. Carmel: Monterey County Archaeological Society, 1979. 100 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 4606, Carmel, 93921. \$24.95.
- Imperial Fresno. *Fresno, California 1897* (reprint). Fresno: Fresno City and County Historical Society, 1979. 152 pp. Publisher, c/o Rosellen Kershaw, 2995 E. Buckingham Way, Fresno 93726. \$17.20.
- Isetti, Ronald E. *A history of the Christian Brothers of the San Francisco district, 1868-1944*. Moraga: Saint Mary's College Publications, 1979. Publisher, Box 412, Saint Mary's College, Moraga, 94575. \$12.95.
- Keeler, Charles. *The simple home*. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1979. 110 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 667, Layton, Utah, 84041. \$9.95.
- Keilty, Edmund. *Interurbans without wires: The rail motorcar in the U.S.* Glendale: Interurbans, 1979. 200 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 6444, Glendale, 91205. \$23.95.
- Keller, John E. (ed.) *Anna Morrison Reed, 1849-1921*. Lafayette: by author, 1979. 312 pp. Author, 3191 Acalanes Avenue, Lafayette, 94540. \$10.95.
- Kelsey, Harry. *The doctrina and confesionario of Juan Cortes*. Altadena: Howling Coyote Press, 1979. 130 pp. Publisher, 2104 North Craig Ave., Altadena, 91001. \$37.50 (limited edition of 125 copies).
- Killion, Tom. *Fortress Marin*. San Rafael: Presidio Press, 1979. 48 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 3515, San Rafael, 94902. \$7.95.
- Knox, Maxine, and Mary Rodriguez. *Making the most of the Monterey Peninsula and Big Sur*. San Rafael: Presidio Press, 1979. 165 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 3515, San Rafael, 94902. \$5.95.
- Leonard, James H. *San Francisco water and power*. San Francisco: Hetch Hetchy Water and Power, 1979. 48 pp. Publisher, 855 Harrison St., San Francisco, 94107.
- Longstreth, Richard W. (ed.) *A matter of taste. Willis Polk's writings on architecture in the Wave*. San Francisco: Book Club of California. \$35.00 (purchase limited to members).
- Maino, Jeannette, and Dena Boer. *Scenes of the Stanislaus, postcard memories*. Fresno: Pioneer Press, 1979. 140 pp. McHenry Museum, 1402 Eye St., Modesty, 95354. \$9.95.
- Mandel, Mike. *San Francisco giants, an oral history*. Santa Cruz: by author, 1979. 256 pp. Author, 111-112 Riverview Street, Santa Cruz, 95062. \$9.95.
- Murphy, Marion Fisher. *Seven stars for California. A story of the capitals*. Sonoma: by author, 1979. Author, 762 Juniper Court, Sonoma, 95476. \$3.75.
- Nowinski, Ira. *No vacancy: urban renewal and the elderly*. San Francisco: Carolyn Bean Associates, 1979. 48 pp. Publisher, 120 Second St., San Francisco, 94105. Cloth \$22.95; paper \$10.95.
- O'Neal, Bill. *Encyclopedia of western gun-fighters*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979. 386 pp. \$24.95.
- Robertson, Deane, and Peggy. *Camels in the West*. Sacramento: Arcade House, 1979. Publisher, P.O. Box 214744, Sacramento, 95821. \$2.95.
- Robinson, W. W. *Land in California* (reprint). Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. 291 pp. Publisher, 2223 Fulton St., Berkeley, 94720. \$4.95.
- Rowell, Galen A. (ed.) *The vertical world of Yosemite: a collection of writings and photographs on rock climbing in Yosemite*. Berkeley: Wilderness Press, 1979. 207 pp. Publishers, 2440 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 94704. Cloth \$16.95; paper \$9.95.
- Sachs, Benjamin. *Carson Mansion and Ingomar Theater*. Fresno: Valley Publishers, 1979. 165 pp. Publisher, 8 East Olive Avenue, Fresno, 93728. \$15.00.
- Sargent, Shirley. *Yosemite's historic Wawona*. Yosemite: Flying Spur Press, 1979. 80 pp. Publisher, Box 278, Yosemite, 95389. \$5.95.
- Schoenman, Theodore (ed.). *Father of California wine: Agoston Haraszthy*. Santa Barbara: Capra Press, 1979. 126 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 2068, Santa Barbara, 93120. \$10.00.
- Standard Oil Company of California. *One hundred years helping to create the future, 1879-1979*. San Francisco: by author, 1979. 174 pp. Author, 225 Bush St., San Francisco, 94104.
- Thompson, Erwin N. *The rock: a history of Alcatraz Island, 1847-1972*. Denver: National Park Service, 1979. 657 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 2587, Denver, Colorado, 80255.
- . *Seacoast fortifications, San Francisco harbor*. Denver: National Park Service, 1979. 615 pp. Publisher, P.O. Box 2587, Denver, Colorado, 80255.
- Verardo, Jennie and Denzil R. *Dr. Edward Turner Bale and his grist mill*. Napa: Napa County Historical Society, 1979. 12 pp. Publisher, 1219 1st St., Napa. \$5.00.
- Wheeler, Katharine Dean (ed.). *A journey to California: the letters of Thaddeus Dean, 1852*. Tampa: American Studies Press, 1979. 26 pp. Publisher, 13511 Palmwood Lane, Tampa, Florida, 33624. \$3.00.



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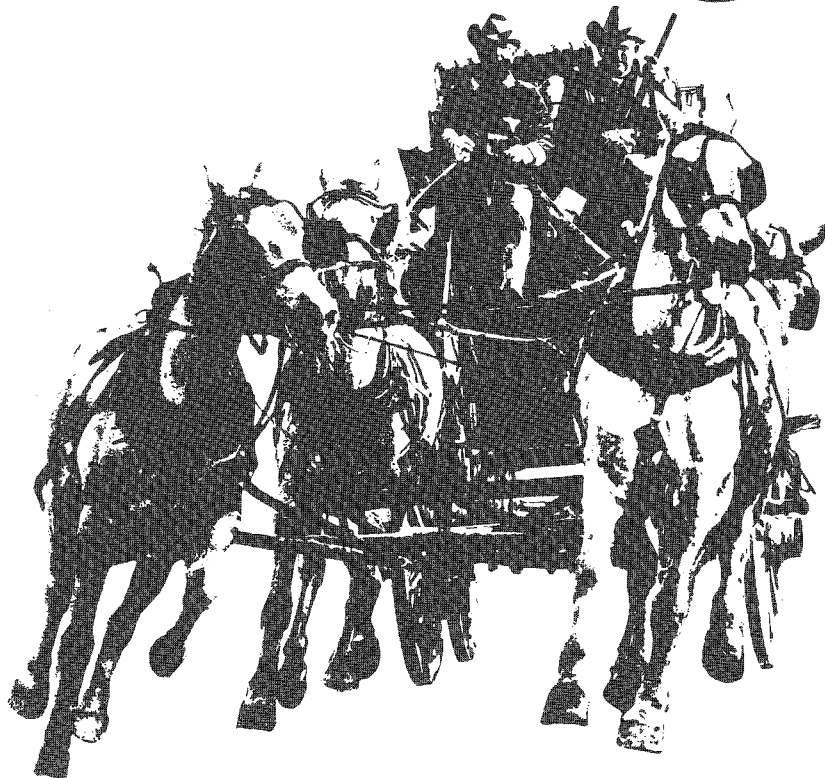
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